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The Shape of Things

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF EARLY NEGOTIATIONS for a trade pact between Great Britain and the United States indicates that the details of an agreement have been all but settled. "Informal" negotiations have been under way for many months, and the broad outlines of the pact are already discernible. It is probable that Britain will grant the United States the privileges which are now reserved for the dominions under the empire-preference system in return for the most substantial reductions in the American tariff yet to be granted. Subsequent agreements with the dominions are expected to consolidate the arrangement. Behind this move lies an interesting and significant theory: that the best way to combat the threat of the dictatorships is to strengthen the economic structure of the democracies. A reduction in trade barriers is not only calculated to stimulate prosperity within the countries immediately concerned but to forge a strong bond between them. As economic strategy, the wisdom of the plan is beyond dispute. For years economists have been advocating precisely this sort of action. As high political strategy it also has its merits, but in no sense is it a substitute for a positive political program to stop fascist aggression. There is real danger that our world may tumble about us before we have an opportunity to enjoy the benefits of long-range economic collaboration.

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THE MAYORS OF 150 AMERICAN CITIES SEE a hard winter ahead. The shadow of increasing unemployment hung heavy over their annual conference in Washington last week, and the necessity for large federal relief funds was the theme of the session. The conference issued a proclamation calling for a study and a solution of the problem of unemployment; without a dissenting vote it resolved that "the WPA must increase its employment quota," asked for a clear definition of the terms "employable" and "unemployable," and directed its executive committee to make a survey of conditions with specific recommendations to be made at the regular session of Congress in January. The cities, faced with the prospect of hungry thousands on their doorsteps, are impelled to emphasize what budget fanciers like to forget, that relief is a national problem and that it can be minimized only at the peril of public welfare and public peace. In general the first-hand and bitter experience of the past seven years has turned the country's mayors,

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regardless of their local political affiliations, into ardent advocates of adequate relief, and work relief at that, low-cost housing, and other enlightened policies. They seem also on the way to realizing the importance of labor and its well-being in the larger scheme of community well-being. The mayors' conference passed a resolution calling upon the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L. to adjust their differences in the public interest; and even the most conservative of them may have seen the relevance to the problem of relief of J. Warren Madden's strictures on the frequent "conniving" of city officials to frustrate labor laws in the interest of employers, and particularly his criticism of cities which have invited runaway shops to exploit local labor to the detriment not only of civil rights but of community living standards.

*

THERE IS SOMETHING LUDICROUS IN THE stampede of Congress to tear down the corporate-tax structure. And it is ironic that the wrecking should be most loudly demanded by the people who are clamoring most for a balanced budget. Our mathematics may be at fault, but it is difficult for us to see how the cause of a balanced budget will be advanced by wiping out five or six hundred million dollars in taxes, which is the estimate of the revenue loss that will follow the repeal of the undistributed-profits tax. The group that are pressing for tax repeal are in a curious situation. They would actually prefer the repeal of the capital-gains tax, but they have to concentrate their fire on the undistributed-profits tax because the latter offers a good opportunity for its opponents to pose as defenders of the small and independent business man. That is what they are doing now, and with a good chance of success. The President has an opportunity to stiffen the resistance against this drive by insisting that whatever concessions are granted to corporations be granted also to partnerships and individuals; and that if corporations are allowed to pile up untaxed surpluses, the non-corporate forms of business activity be allowed to do the same.

*

THE SENATE'S FILIBUSTER AGAINST THE anti-lynching bill represents political reaction and hypocrisy at their lowest point. The Southern Democratic Senators who oppose the bill have been acting ostensibly not only in behalf of the sacred principle of states' rights but to speed up the "real business" of the special session. They want Congress to "quit wasting time." Has it occurred to Senators Bailey, George, and Connally that an excellent time-saving device would be a prompt vote on the anti-lynching bill? We have an idea that it has occurred to them; but they know too that seventy Senate votes are already lined up for the measure and that it stands an excellent chance of being passed. So they throw the hours away talking about the shocking delays involved in debating a controversial issue like the use of federal powers to suppress lynching. The South, however, is not to be judged by the Senators from Texas, North Carolina, and Georgia. Virginius Dabney's article in this issue shows how widespread is the support for a federal anti-lynching measure; while a recent Gallup poll indicates not only that 72 per cent of the people throughout the nation favor the Wagner-Van Nuys bill but that 57 per cent in the South feel the same way.

*

ALTHOUGH THE DETAILS OF LORD HALIFAX'S talks with Hitler are still unknown, it is evident that they have failed to turn Germany from its main objectives. Hitler has cleverly refused to commit himself on his possible course of action in the event of an Italian-British war, and has given no indication of abandoning his ambitions in Eastern Europe. In a speech at Augsburg after the conclusion of the talks he reasserted his demand for colonies, though there had been reports that he was willing to withdraw this demand if Britain were prepared "to respect the vital rights and needs of Germany in Europe." While this is presumably farther than even the Simon-Halifax wing of the Conservative Party is willing to go, some sort of a "deal" is by no means out of the question. Leading Tories are known to have urged Chamberlain to sacrifice France, if necessary, for the sake of an Anglo-German agreement. An even larger wing of the party is determined to force France to repudiate the Franco-Soviet agreement as a condition of continued support. At the moment, however, the danger is not so much that Britain will immediately accede to Hitler's demands as that it will continue to be confused and impotent in the face of the ever-darkening war clouds in the Far East. Although the reports that the Soviet Union is tapering off its aid to Spain were promptly denied, it cannot be doubted that Moscow has been increasingly disturbed by developments in China. Any weakness or vacillation on the part of Britain increases the danger that the war in the Far East will develop into a world conflict.

*

THE BRUSSELS CONFERENCE WILL NOW BE added to the long list of futile attempts to stem the tide of international anarchy. That it has failed is beyond dispute. In condemning Japan's aggression in China it contributed nothing that had not already been achieved by the League's action. It has served merely to convince aggressors and would-be aggressors of what they were already sure—that the democracies will not pull together even to protect their own interests. In the past few years it has become fashionable to berate the British government for the unaccountable shortsightedness of its foreign policy. But in this case it is impossible to make Britain the scapegoat. Responsibility for the fiasco at Brussels lies equally on the steps of the White House. The conference was summoned because the League powers accepted the President's Chicago speech at its face value. It was believed that the United States had at last reached the point where it saw the necessity for positive joint action to check aggression. There is every indication that Great Britain and France were prepared to accept any program the United States might suggest. But instead of

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furnishing leadership in a plan "to quarantine aggressors," the United States, through its anachronistic neutrality legislation, has blocked the one practical proposal brought before the conference—that of rendering positive aid to China. True, the French have similarly capitulated in closing the frontier of Indo-China. But there is a vast and important distinction between refusal to take unilateral action which might lead to war, and failure to cooperate in collective measures to preserve peace.

*

WHAT WE SHALL PAY IN OUR HOMES FOR gas and electricity in the coming years may be decided soon by the Supreme Court. Recently it heard a brilliant argument by Oswald Ryan, general counsel of the Federal Power Commission, urging a reversal of the emphasis that it has given since Smythe *vs.* Ames in 1898 to the doctrine that public-utility rates should be set on a valuation determined by the cost of reproducing the properties new. There can be little doubt even in conservative circles that Mr. Ryan was right in calling such a rate base administratively impractical and economically illogical. But it is a good deal to hope that the court will reverse its trend and adopt instead the "prudent investment" rule which Justice Brandeis has been advocating in historic dissenting opinions over the past twenty years. The case before the court now is the Pacific Gas and Electric case. It turns on the question whether the California state commission denied due process of law in ordering a rate reduction without giving adequate weight to the utility's evidence on "reproduction cost." In June of this year, in the same case, the court divided four to four, with Justice Sutherland not voting. The case has now been reopened. The counsel for the company, Warren Olney, Jr., spent some anxious moments answering questions by Justices Hughes and Stone as to why the company felt it had been denied due process when it had had an unhampered chance to present testimony. Justice Black's vote, which will undoubtedly be on the liberal side, should make the decision five to three for the government on the due-process issue. But there is every probability that the court will make its decision on narrow grounds, and that we shall have to wait some time before the prudent-investment doctrine of rate valuation is stamped with judicial approval.

*

A JUDGE RATHER THAN A JURY FOUND James H. Rand and Pearl L. Bergoff not guilty of violating the Byrnes law, which forbids the transportation of strike-breakers across a state line with the intention of interfering with peaceful picketing. Testimony at the trial revealed eloquently the workings of the notorious Mohawk Valley Formula, which Mr. Rand devised for combating strikes and which he so successfully sold to Little Steel. A strike was called at the Remington Rand typewriter plant at Middletown, Connecticut, in May, 1936. Until June 26 picketing was so peaceful that not a single arrest had been made. On that day Mr. Rand went to Stamford, where he boarded a train to meet Bergoff and 57 of that gentleman's picked gorillas, en route to Mid lletown as "millwrights." They were being imported to dismantle the plant, Rand announced in an effort to imulate a back-to-work movement. No attempt at dis antling was even begun; the millwrights testified that hey were instructed first to do "missionary" work, that , to spread false propaganda among the strikers; ther still following the formula, they were to provoke trou ble so that Rand might obtain a restraining injunction. T ney did their work well—and Rand helped them, riding up and down along the picket line thumbing his nose He got his injunction. If the testimony against Ranc and Bergoff was startling, Judge Hincks's charge to the jury was much more so. Hitting a new judicial low, he told the jury that the prosecutor had attempted to reate an "atmosphere" prejudicial to the defendant a d had failed to prove his charges of suppressed evid nce; cautioned them to distinguish between peaceful pic eting and mass picketing, which he said approached ne character of "organized intimidation"; and conclud d by remarking that the law does not require an emp loyer "to retire to his lair like a rabbit and submit to th eatened violence." After a charge like that it required r extraordinary nerve for Mr. Rand to remark to a re porter: "It is still no violation of the law to transport stri e-breakers. It's a flimsy law." The reporter did not say w nether or not Mr. Rand pointed this opinion by the gestu : that he has made his high sign.

*

AS PRESII ENT OF A GIRLS' COLLEGE FOR twenty years Dr. William Allen Neilson has had what might be ter ied definitive experience with mother love; and his den nciation of it as the "only element with which I have come in contact . . . which makes me think less of huma nature" is not to be taken lightly. It hasn't been. It has fluttered the mother-love cotes, to put it mildly, and no doubt given Smith College daughters something t write home about (which is always welcome to an undergraduate). The vested interests of parental affe tion and education have split into several camps. Need ess to say, the progressive-education party has lined up pretty solidly behind Dr. Neilson; but our favorite com ient came from the right in the declaration of Mrs. Wil iam Barclay Parsons, Jr., president of the Parents' Lea ue. "Mother love," she said, "is the only thing that is eft to us. If you can't have that, where are you?" John S . Smithers, general manager of the Society for the Prev ation of Cruelty to Children, said that he had not enc intered the mother love described by Dr. Neilson—wh ch suggests that even maternal affection is subject to ec nomic determinism and that, specifically, mother love n the Smith College brackets differs from that to be m : with in the slums, where the S. P. C. C. mainly opera es. As for ourselves, we cannot help feeling that twenty y ars as a college president entitle Dr. Neilson to speak his mind at last. Certainly his epigrammatic statem t that "mother love is largely a matter of saving moth 's face" introduces a new and refreshing note into cel rations of twentieth anniversaries.

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NO HAPPIER CHOICE THAN VISCOUNT CECIL could have been made for the 1937 Nobel Peace Prize. In a day when hundreds of our so-called peace leaders have abandoned their posts in the face of adverse storms, Lord Cecil, one of the founders of the League of Nations, has courageously clung to the principle of collective security as the only basis on which lasting peace can be built. Under his leadership the League of Nations Union of Great Britain has become one of the world's few realistic and powerful peace organizations. It is largely because of his influence that the British and Continental peace organizations have unitedly backed a boycott against Japan at a time when the American movement is pitifully confused and divided on this issue.

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THE PICTURE MAGAZINES HAVE BEEN HAILED as an enormous potential force since they tap levels of consciousness and emotion not reached by the written word. With a few honorable exceptions, such as the issue of *Look* devoted to civil liberties, they have descended to rather low levels of gossip, snobbery, and sex pruriency. The most honorable exception is *Photo-History*, published quarterly by the same group that is putting out the excellent Modern Age books. Unlike its pictorial fellows, *Photo-History* makes no attempt to offer an assemblage of titbits about public personalities and private lives. It devotes each issue to only one significant subject, and develops that subject through pictures and text in a mature and adult fashion. Its first two issues dealt with the "War in Spain" and "Labor's Challenge." Its current issue, "War Is Here," is a stirring pictorial analysis of the forces that have involved a large part of the earth's surface in war already and are driving the rest of the world toward the abyss. It is the best pictorial treatment we have seen of the background of war. Our only doubt is whether the mass that will be reached by the pictures will understand the text as well. The sight of mangled young bodies piled on a truck arouses horror. But the direction of that horror can only be realized by following a rather arduous analysis. There is no royal pictorial road to social understanding.

*

READERS MUST HAVE BEEN AMAZED TO discover in the recesses of the New York *Herald Tribune* of Sunday, November 21, a forty-page supplement bearing the legend "Cuba Today, Land of Peace and Progress." The section was entirely devoted to praise of the present regime in Cuba, headed by Colonel Fulgencio Batista, which has piled up a record of brutality and betrayal second only to that of Gerardo Machado. The files of any newspaper for the past few years would give the lie to this fancy supplement, which is one of the most flagrant pieces of propaganda ever printed outside a totalitarian press. At the bottom of each page, where one might expect to see the label "Advertisement" in small type, appears this sentence: "This section written and presented by friends of Cuba." At this moment Cuba lies helpless in the grip of a military dictatorship for which the United States is in part responsible. The *Herald Tribune* does its bit to secure the power of that dictatorship. In the pages of its supplement President Laredo Bru and members of his Batista-controlled Cabinet in turn give glowing accounts of the progress made under the military dictatorship. But the crowning touch is left to a journalist named Lawrence De Besault, who seems to have had a major hand in the whole promotion scheme. Mr. De Besault bubbles over as follows:

> Colonel Fulgencio Batista should and must be the next President of the Republic of Cuba. He will be an outstanding President. He will continue his role as the Great Emancipator of Cuba, as was our sublime Lincoln. Colonel Batista not only must guide beloved Cuba as her next President, but must, at the same time, retain the position as Chief of the Constitutional Army. . . . Cuba needs him for her continued peace, progress, and prosperity.

The American public has a right to know who are the "friends of Cuba" that "presented" to the *Herald Tribune* this brazen eulogy of Cuba's oppressors. We shall do our best to find out.

Is Roosevelt on the Run?

THE special session of Congress has distinguished itself so far by its devotion to horseplay. The House spent most of its time during the opening week debating whether to adjourn, and the Senate has been absorbed in a filibuster against the anti-lynching bill, featuring Tom Connally of Texas in a display that recalls the days of Huey Long. A Congress called together to enact desperately needed legislation has become paralyzed by the sort of party politics that puts the believers in representative government on the defensive and adds force to the fascist arguments about the powerlessness of democracies.

What has happened to Congress is fairly clear. When Congressmen go home during the summer, they do not mingle exclusively with the plain people to discover their needs and drives. With honorable exceptions, most of them use the weeks of interlude to sit at the tables of the rich. They yearn to be drawn into the councils of the great, and they note anxiously their reception in the social circles of their home town. This process provides an easy set-up for the reactionary forces. Add the fact that immediately after Congress adjourned last August the Chambers of Commerce, Manufacturers' Associations, Constitutional Leagues, and similar groups deluged the country with literature. Add also the fact that every Congressman has been talked to over the summer by these groups about balancing the budget, about repealing corporation taxes, about the viciousness of the wage-hour bill, about the government's attack on the utilities. Little wonder, then, that while the small liberal bloc in Congress —the Young Turks—is still firmly liberal, the lukewarm liberals who hold the balance of power in both houses have come back with the dreamy look in their eyes which

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shows that they have listened to the song of the financial sirens. It need surprise no one that the business recession has become, for these people, the final and clinching argument for shedding their ill-fitting liberalism.

One had only to listen to Senator Bailey's farrago of vituperation while he was filibustering against the anti-lynching bill to understand the main lines of reactionary strategy in Congress. That strategy is to keep hammering on the business recession; to make it appear—without an iota of proof, because no proof is possible—that the recession was due to the Administration's tax policies; to use the repeal or revision of the corporation taxes as the entering wedge for repealing, modifying, and qualifying all the basic legislation seeking to control business. As far as the present special session is concerned, the plan is to filibuster and delay so that one bill after another is held up, and then at the tail-end of the session to get through an emergency farm bill which even the Southern and Midwestern reactionaries want. But the larger strategy is aimed at the whole New Deal program.

The blame does not lie wholly with the reactionaries. A large part of it rests on the shoulders of Mr. Roosevelt and the Administration. The reactionaries, after reading the President's message, are rejoicing as they have not rejoiced since Roosevelt took office. They feel that they have him on the run, and that his retreat cannot stop short of an utter rout. They have gone so far in the insolence of their claims that Arthur Krock, who ought to know, reports that Wall Streeters are complaining that the President added to the section of his message on aiding business some unnecessary sections about wages and hours, regional planning, and so on. And the gloom among liberals in Congress is thicker than it has been for years. They feel that the President has let them down. He has, we think, given both groups adequate grounds for their belief. His message to Congress was weak and defensive. It played into the hands of those who have been saying for years that business alone can be depended on to remedy business ills. It has been interpreted as leaving the door wide open for drastic tax revision. It has given a sort of reality to the hopes of the budget balancers. And of the sections on specific legislation, the only one with any punch at all was the one on the wage-hour bill. The rest gave the impression of a jockey who knows the race is lost and is trotting his horse to the finish only to save appearances.

It is clear that Mr. Roosevelt feared a strong Congressional revolt if he were to adopt a firmer line. It is perfectly true that there is no progressive leadership in Congress to give him firm support. Barkley is doing his best and Rayburn is sincere; among the left-wing forces there are the groups clustering around La Follette and Maverick. But there are also Speaker Bankhead, O'Connor, Doughton, Harrison, Connally, Bailey. Some are open opponents of the Administration, while remaining Democrats; some are masquerading as friends. The failure of the Rules Committee of the House even to report out the wage-hour bill is a flagrant indication that the Democrats lack even the parliamentary principle of party responsibility. Mr. Roosevelt's mistake, however, was to allow the Wall Street attack and the Congressional defection to shape his policy. Despite the various past "breathing spells" that he has given business, he has been fairly consistent in holding the aggressive, and it has been only as a result of the persistent thrust of his program that he has gained his economic and political successes. Today he seems to have abandoned that strategy. He may believe that Congress, if it fails to check the downward spiral of employment by an appeal to business, will once more turn to him for rescue. But if so, he is mistaken. Neither Congress nor the country will turn for leadership to a President who surrenders on major issues.

Caribbean Nightmare

HARROWING rumors of the slaughter of some eight thousand Haitian squatters by the troops of General Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, miniature Hitler of the Dominican Republic, have seeped through the censorship. The story, as reported by impartial American observers in Haiti, is this: On October 2 Trujillo went to the border town where the massacre later took place and announced that he was going to clear his country of "dogs, hogs, and Haitians." Whereupon the dictator's troops descended on the Haitian peasants, who had been driven into Santo Domingo by land hunger. The men were first beaten with clubs, then hacked to death with machetes. Women were stabbed to death, and even babies were tossed on bayonets. Victims were lured into the forests and slaughtered, and when the supply gave out, others were taken from the jails where they were awaiting deportation, trussed up, and tossed into the sea to drown. In the town of Santiago 1,900 Haitians who had lived in Santo Domingo for generations were herded into a courtyard and exterminated.

General Trujillo, who, it is said, supervised these atrocities from his temporary headquarters in a local brothel, has had the effrontery to promise the Haitian authorities that the men responsible for the massacre will be punished. Appalled by the slaughter, some Dominican troops have deserted to Haiti rather than obey orders, and even a few of Trujillo's political henchmen have opposed the government. The dictator is directing a fierce wave of terror against these apostates.

The causes of the massacre are obscure. With only half the area of the Dominican Republic and twice its population, Haiti suffers from a dearth of land. Hordes of Haitian workers are swept into the Cuban sugar fields at harvest time. Today they are being deported wholesale by Batista, thus adding to the population pressure within Haiti. The big American sugar plantations in eastern Santo Domingo import Haitian labor at harvest time over Trujillo's new military roads. Tens of thousands of Negro agricultural workers had settled in the fertile, unoccupied land of the Dominican border country. Trujillo, moreover, seems to need a foreign war to stifle revolutionary sentiment at home. Not content with owning the Dominican Republic, he has plundered it. Private monopolies of salt, meat, milk, shoes, and tobacco

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drive up retail prices beyond the purchasing power of the people. Trujillo's swollen army absorbs a large part of the country's revenue. The little dictator has just received four bombing planes staffed with Italian officers.

Rafael Trujillo is an aftermath of American imperialist occupation. This convicted horse thief and forger rose to power because he served as an informer for the American marines. Military occupation eventually ceased, but the $30,000,000 of American investment lingered on, and Trujillo rose through revolution to the Presidency. Today his political enemies are shot down, the press is censored, the dictatorship absolute. All Santo Domingo sings in unison the glories of Trujillo's rule. On the roof of the vice-president's new residence an electric sign spells out "God and Trujillo" in red, white, and blue lights.

Despite the fact that the United States has agreed to join Cuba and Mexico in mediating the dispute between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, there is little chance of any mitigation of Trujillo's tyrannical rule. We neither expect nor desire the State Department to interfere in the political affairs of other American nations, but before any mediation efforts are concluded we should like to have a thorough airing of this grim episode. If only a fraction of the grisly reports are true, it would be criminal negligence on the part of the State Department to whitewash Trujillo and thereby tighten his stranglehold on the Dominican Republic.

Politics Versus Housing

WE print herewith a chronical of political maneuvers executed in a field where politics does not belong. The record is revealing. Our readers are advised to watch events, for the plot thickens day by day.

October 21. On this day, at the height of the New York mayoralty campaign, Harold Ickes, Public Works Administrator and Cabinet member, in a speech celebrating the completion of the new city sewage-disposal plant, took occasion to praise New York's "able and progressive mayor," to whose requests for federal funds he had "always found it difficult to say 'no' "—a remark which the New York *Times* reported as "especially helpful to the Mayor" in his campaign for reelection. It will be recalled that at the same time Postmaster General Farley, another member of the Roosevelt Cabinet, was openly backing the candidacy of Jeremiah T. Mahoney, Mayor LaGuardia's opponent.

November 3. Nathan Straus, who had been appointed Federal Housing Administrator by President Roosevelt, took office. Mr. Ickes, "under the direction" of whom Mr. Straus legally functions, was known to have opposed the appointment. Mr. Straus had previously been a member of the New York City Housing Authority, which from the start of the New Deal housing program has been at odds with Mr. Ickes over the issue of federal versus local jurisdiction. The progress of this struggle, in which the other city authorities have sided with New York, has been recorded from time to time in *The Nation.* We have often pointed out that Mr. Ickes's suspicion of the local authorities and his insistence on keeping the detailed control over housing in his own hands have been the chief cause of the delays in getting houses built.

November 16. Mr. Straus, in whose hands are placed $500,000,000 of federal funds for loans and subsidies to public-housing projects, invited members of leading local authorities to confer with him in Washington on November 22 to discuss the practical details of putting these funds to immediate use. Included in this invitation were Langdon Post, chairman of the New York City Authority, and Charles Abrams, its counsel. They immediately accepted.

November 19. On this date Mr. LaGuardia reentered the scene. He announced to the newspapers that "no New York City official" would be allowed to attend the conference Mr. Straus had called. He attacked Mr. Straus for dilatory methods, saying that there was no time for "star-gazing conferences," and he took pains to point out that Mr. Ickes was a "real driver" who "gets things accomplished." All this hardly more than two weeks after Mr. Straus began his gigantic job of changing the whole federal housing program over—as he is required to do by the Wagner-Steagall Act—from that of a centralized bureaucracy to one of local autonomy, and, at the same time, working out the complex details of a series of crucial new policies implicit in the act's provisions.

The issue in all this is clear—partisan and personal politics versus the independence of local housing authorities. The issue is also important. If local authorities are to function effectively in this new and crucial venture in government-owned and operated housing, they must be as free as possible from all forms of political control. The need for decentralization has been established; while standards should be set by the federal government, housing must be built by the localities. But these authorities must also be independent of city administrations. The New York law, by requiring a multiple membership with staggered terms of office, by giving housing authorities bond-issuing and land-condemning powers, was designed to insure a status quite different from that of the ordinary city department—one which would be as free as possible from the influence of local politics. If Mayor LaGuardia should force his will upon the present New York Authority in a relatively minor matter, a future mayor might the more easily order a less conscientious chairman to throw a contract this way or that, or to man a new project with deserving constituents.

Politics must be kept out of public housing. Mayor LaGuardia's great vote-getting strength in the past has been his courageous disregard of politics. He cannot afford now to dilute that strength—even at the height of his popularity. And, incidentally, good politics as well as good principle demands that he play ball with Mr. Straus. After all, Mr. Straus holds the purse-strings, and New York needs decent housing.

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Dixie Rejects Lynching

BY VIRGINIUS DABNEY

A CHANGE has come over the South. Congress is almost sure to pass a federal anti-lynching bill in the present session, but there is no excitement in Dixie. Twenty years ago the mere thought of such legislation would have caused Southern colonels to tear their mustachios with rage and Southerners of lesser rank to implore the deity to save Dixie for white supremacy and protect the fair name of Southern womanhood. Fortunately such hysteria is no longer widely prevalent.

I do not mean to say that the South is anything like a unit in desiring federal anti-lynching legislation. There are thousands who resent the impending passage of the Wagner-Van Nuys bill, and who doubtless will do all in their power to nullify its effects after it is on the statute books. At the same time there apparently is a much larger body of Southerners who either favor such a law or are willing to give it a trial. The diehards are distinctly in the minority.

If such were not the case, the value of a federal bill would be doubtful, since the hates and rancors engendered by its passage would probably overbalance the anticipated benefits. All too frequently Southern juries, even in the federal courts, would refuse to convict derelict officers, and Negroes would be subjected to all kinds of persecution and discrimination at the hands of resentful whites. This would mean, in all likelihood, that the Negro's lot would be made worse rather than better. But since so many Southerners have awakened at last to the true nature of lynching, the federal bill is expected not only to pass but to achieve a great reduction in the number of these crimes below the Potomac and the Ohio. There has been a gradual change in the attitude of thoughtful citizens of the South toward such legislation, an attitude largely conditioned by their judgment as to its probable effects. Symbolic of the change is the recent shift in the policy of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, which includes 130 representative Southerners from thirteen states and has its headquarters in Atlanta. For years this body refused to indorse federal anti-lynching legislation, but in 1935 it gave unanimous approval to the Costigan-Wagner bill and now similarly favors the Wagner-Van Nuys bill.

An incident which must have had enormous influence in swinging many citizens of Dixie over to the view that the time has come to stop playing around the fringes of the lynching problem was the sickening killing of Claude Neal. Taken from an Alabama jail in the autumn of 1934, Neal was carried to Florida and put to death with unspeakable savagery. In earlier days special trains were operated for men and boys who wished to take part in or to witness lynchings which had been announced in advance, but those in charge of the Neal affair carried the process a step farther. Fifteen hours' notice was given the nation in the newspapers and over the radio that Neal was to die. From 4,000 to 7,000 whites, including many children, came by automobile from various nearby states and witnessed his prolonged agony. No one was even arrested.

The Neal affair was convincing evidence to unbiased minds that some Southern states were wholly unwilling to proceed against lynchers. If any further demonstration was needed, it came soon after with the blow-torch barbarity at Duck Hill, Mississippi. Two Negroes accused of murdering a white storekeeper were taken in broad daylight by an unmasked mob from the custody of three officers and tortured to death with a blow-torch, while hundreds of men, women, and children looked on. The officers failed to recognize anybody in the mob, and no one was arrested.

At least six other persons have been lynched in the South so far this year, and state and local authorities have brought no one to justice for any of these crimes. The cumulative effect has naturally been to demonstrate once more that while a few Southern states are willing to take the steps necessary to eradicate mob murder, the official spokesmen for the others content themselves with pious declarations that they "hate lynching," and vociferous arguments that the states should be permitted to "manage their own affairs."

Southerners who are disgusted with this situation have concluded that lynchings will continue below Mason and Dixon's Line until a federal law with teeth in it is placed on the books. This opinion is far more prevalent in the South today than it has ever been before. A survey conducted by the Institute of Public Opinion this month showed that 57 per cent of all Southerners favored such legislation. The validity of this poll might be challenged by skeptics, despite its astonishingly accurate prediction of the extent of Roosevelt's victory at the polls last year, if other evidence did not point to the same conclusion. Most significant is the fact that an increasing number of Southern newspapers are advocating a federal anti-lynching bill. Although Virginia has a strong law of its own against lynching—there has not been a lynching in the state since the law was passed in 1928—no fewer than eight Virginia dailies are advocating federal anti-lynching legislation at the present time. These include the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot*, the Richmond *News Leader*, and the Richmond *Times-Dispatch*. Other important Southern papers taking a similar stand are the Chattanooga *Times*, the Miami *Daily News*, the Birmingham *Age Herald*, the Greensboro *Daily News*, the San Antonio *Express*, the Columbia *State*, the Louisville

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Courier-Journal, and the New Orleans *Tribune,* as well as most of the Scripps-Howard chain, including the Knoxville *News-Sentinel,* the Birmingham *Post,* the Houston *Press,* and the Fort Worth *Press.* Just as remarkable is the fact that hardly a single leading Southern daily is actively fighting the Wagner-Van Nuys bill.

It is also noteworthy that the papers which are urging federal legislation have had no severe kickback from their readers. The Richmond *Times-Dispatch* has carried a dozen editorials and cartoons this year strongly advocating the passage of a federal bill and has reprinted several dozen editorials and cartoons of similar import from other papers. It has received exactly two letters of protest. To my query concerning the reaction of their readers, editors in Louisville, Greensboro, Miami, Birmingham, New Orleans, and San Antonio have replied that the volume of protest was negligible. What is more, when the Greensboro *Daily News* attacked Senator Josiah Bailey for his filibuster against the Costigan-Wagner bill in 1935, the blast brought the heaviest batch of laudatory letters to the editor received by the paper in seven years.

Despite these clear indications, the impression apparently still prevails among Southern Congressmen that the South is violently opposed to "interference" in its affairs by G-men acting under the provisions of a federal anti-lynching statute. Almost all the Southerners in the House voted against the Gavagan bill when it was passed early this year by a vote of 277 to 119. Maury Maverick of Texas, who spoke and voted for the bill, reported several weeks later that he had not had a single protest from his district. But with the exception of Representatives Creal and Robsion of Kentucky and Reece and Taylor of Tennessee, the rest of the Southern contingent went solidly against the bill. It is apparent that many Southern Representatives and Senators are out of touch with sentiment among their constituents on this issue.

Some Southerners who see no objection to the other provisions of the federal bill dislike the proposal to fine a county or city from $2,000 to $10,000 when negligence on the part of local officials is found to have led to a lynching. It is important to note, however, that twenty-two states now have laws under which fines ranging from $1,000 to $10,000 can be imposed on cities or counties where lynchings occur—and the provision has proved effective. The South Carolina law has been on the books since 1896. The minimum fine of $2,000 was assessed and collected in at least seven counties of the state between 1913 and 1931, and no lynching has occurred in any of the seven since the fine was imposed. Moreover, as James H. Chadbourn points out in his "Lynching and the Law," "the average number of lynchings per year in the state has declined sharply after the infliction of each penalty."

It is possible that the Wagner-Van Nuys bill, if passed, will be pronounced unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. It is also possible that if the measure is upheld by the court, lynchings will continue on the same scale as before. But that seems unlikely. For the first time the bulk of Southern opinion appears to be definitely favorable to federal anti-lynching legislation, or at least not disturbed over the prospect of its passage. That fact should assure the public support which in the last analysis must determine the effectiveness of any law.

What Next in France?

BY M. E. RAVAGE

Paris, November 6

NOW that the local (canton) elections are over and the various parties have had their congresses and conventions and national councils, there is nothing to prevent Parliament from getting to work. The government has a heavy agenda for it—the critical international situation, the menacing developments in North Africa, a complex of unliquidated social questions, the still "floating" franc, and, most important of all, the Bonnet budget for the coming year. This last promises to set off the fireworks; there has been no little smoke in the wings already, and the average Frenchman, thinking of his country's bitter need for stability, is asking himself not so much what the government is preparing for the forthcoming session as what deputies and senators have in store for M. Chautemps and his colleagues. It is common knowledge that the foes of the Front Populaire originally meant to trip up the Blum Cabinet this autumn. The schedule was advanced and the blow struck in June simply in order to stave off another batch of nationalization laws, affecting among other interests the railroads. The treasury deficit was but the pretext, and the plenary powers demanded by Blum merely furnished the occasion. The majority fears, and the opposition is convinced, that it will be the turn of Chautemps now, that the process of annulling the popular decision at the polls will reach its culmination, and that the last vestige of the People's Front will be swept away before the winter.

But this time Senators Joseph Caillaux and Abel Gardey will be spared the chore of wielding the ax. It needed no major prophet to foresee in what direction and by what steps the left bloc would evolve during these past five months. Once the spell was broken, once the *mystique* of the Front Populaire was punctured, the seed of decay inevitably entered the body of the coalition, and the disruptive process began to operate from within. The entry into a nominally Front Populaire Cabinet of a man

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with the antecedents and associations of Bonnet, who never even pretended to share the Front Populaire *mystique,* was not only emblematic; it was a signpost for the future. A coalition in which the Socialists had a plurality, a coalition which had come into power on a platform of the redistribution of wealth and the power that goes with wealth, was now to have a friend and confidant of the big banks presiding over the purse-strings. And the head of the second Front Populaire Cabinet was himself a Radical of the second zone, who, unlike the left Radicals of the Daladier-Cot shade, had all along kept aloof from the popular movement which had swept over France after the dramatic events of 1934.

How long could labor, the Socialists, the progressive forces which had made the Front Populaire, go on pretending that nothing was changed? How long could the Socialists go on collaborating in, or even supporting, a government with the outlook and tendencies of the Chautemps-Bonnet team? Once M. Bonnet settled down to the tasks for which he had been called in, the Socialists and the trade unions were bound to go on the warpath. They are resisting fiercely now, though not yet openly. The Minister of Finance, upheld by the Premier, wants to balance the budget; labor and the Socialists demand an end of the "pause" and a return to the program approved by the voters. But the left wing of the coalition has since June been on the defensive. It must either follow the government or take the onus of overthrowing it and seeming to disrupt a Front Populaire which in reality has been but a shadow for five months past. At the recent congress of the Radical Party at Lille, M. Chautemps put the challenge and the present attitude of the bloc succinctly when he said, "So long as it remains possible we shall go along maintaining our pact with the Socialists." Thereupon he invested with his authority the reactionary formula for balancing the budget, thus serving notice on his Socialist partners that they had the choice of going along on his terms or of driving him into the arms of the center.

The Socialist voters, if not their leaders, have other and older grievances against their Radical friends. They cannot forget that it was the Radical Senate that last June tripped up the first Front Populaire Cabinet. They cannot forgive Chautemps for so eagerly leaping into the breach. He should, they maintain, have declined the offer and thus obliged Lebrun to call back Blum or some other member of the party which the country had designated for office. They recall that in the past when a Radical Premier was forced out, it was not a Socialist but another Radical who was asked to carry on. At the very least, they hold, the new combination should have been headed by an out-and-out Front Populaire Radical like Daladier. And they reproach their friends not least for keeping within their bosom, and even putting up for election, men who can by no stretch be considered left. At the time of the recent local elections Radical candidates in a considerable number of cantons openly flouted the Front Populaire, no doubt in order to attract right votes. And the fascist parties of La Rocque and Doriot publicly instructed their adherents to throw their support to the Radical candi ate wherever their own man had no chance of being elec d.

To this the Radicals retort that the Front Populaire is not a super-p rty (the Communists themselves said so), that the cons ituent parties have not surrendered their independence and that therefore they alone must judge who is and w o is not fit to carry their banner. Besides, the Socialists lso have in their midst men and wings not wholly accept ble to their allies—Marceau Pivert, for instance, and l s revolutionary left. The essence of the Front Popula e, according to the Radicals, is the pact of mutual withc awal and mutual support in the second ballot. And th e Socialists, by refusing to withdraw their own candidat s and throw the support of their partisans to certain Rad cal candidates in the cantonal elections, on the pretext th at these were not of the required purity, have broken t e contract and undermined the front.

Between th Radicals and the Communists there is, on the surface a least, perfect understanding, now as all along. Thorez and his friends, explain those who have no love for then , are not interested in the social reforms of the Blum government or in the well-being of the French worke s. For them the Front Populaire is but an instrument fo consolidating opinion behind the Franco-Soviet pact an l for uniting the country against the fascist powers—in th e Spanish tragedy for the present and in the bigger st ggle to come in the not distant future. That is why a out a year ago Communist demonstrators publicly insul d Delbos, while against Bonnet they have not raised th ir voices above a whisper. Be that as it may, it is ce tain that, underneath, there is no more harmony in th is sector of the left coalition than there is on the rest of the front. For this there are three, or perhaps four, rea ons: first, the persistent Communist agitation for fusio with the Socialists to form a single proletarian party tactics which the Radicals regard as directed against themselves; second, the encroachments of Thorez's part on the peasant vote, which the Radicals traditionally h ld to be their private preserve; third, the manner in wh ich the Communists encourage strikes of a political nat re among the trade unions under their influence, in bel alf of Spain and other causes unrelated to wages and ho rs. Finally, some Radicals are persuaded that the Com unists are not "sincere" in their recent conversion to class cooperation and in their hearts are still a revoluti nary party.

The Radica s are not alone in their complaints of the new tactics of the Communists. Since the fusion of the two trade-unio n confederations there has been the most irritating frict on between the two tendencies, which live side by side w thout coalescing. The controversy is over control. The " ure" trade unionists resent the alleged attempt of the Communists to inject political issues into the C. G. T. a d thereby to capture the organization and its five millior workers for purposes alien to labor; they point to a long series of attempts, many of them successful, to "coloni e" local and national federations by dark and unfair int igues. The ex-C. G. T. U. (Communist) trade councils for example, demand equal representation in steerin committees where they are the minority;

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failing there, they ostensibly agree to a compromise and at the last moment spring a list of candidates of their own. Or they intrigue to obtain a fusion of more or less related trade groups where the combination would result in giving them a majority. And, still according to the "pure" trade unionists, they carry on campaigns of indoctrination among the millions of new members and assert that the growth of the C. G. T. since the strikes was in reality a mass movement in favor of the old C. G. T. U. For a long time Léon Jouhaux tried to remain aloof, but in July even he became aroused and raised his voice against the "tendencies" which had disintegrated the labor movement in 1922, against "external influences and underhanded practices which sow mistrust among us."

Meanwhile the experience of the C. G. T. is not lost on the Socialist Party, and the efforts of Thorez to undo the mischief of 1920—when the Communists broke away—far from making progress, are merely embittering the good feeling reestablished between the two parties in the last two or three years. The correspondence and editorials appearing in the *Populaire* and the *Humanité* grow daily more acrimonious; and the Front Populaire, in its proletarian wing, is not thriving in consequence.

What, then, is in store for France in the coming weeks? It would be hazardous to guess. In all probability a "republican concentration"—that is to say, a government made up of the Radicals and center, with more or less regular support from the extreme left—is in the cards. Fascism? None but a congenital pessimist could envisage such a culmination. For if the left is slowly drawing apart, the right, above all the lunatic fringe of the right, is infinitely more divided. But that is matter for a subsequent article.

A Steel Man O. K.'s the C. I. O.

BY LOUIS ADAMIC

I SAT in the office of a friend of mine, who is an important man in the C. I. O. campaign to unionize the steel industry, on the thirty-sixth floor of the Grant Building in Pittsburgh, which is part of the elegant headquarters of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee. The day before, a strike had begun in one of the smaller local mills, whose general manager refused to deal with "those communistic, irresponsible unions run by John L. Lewis." This phrase, when I quoted it to him from a front-page story in the Pittsburgh newspaper I had brought with me, amused my friend. The man, he said, was parroting Tom Girdler and Bill Green, both of whom knew better. In the first place, the C. I. O. was a trade-union movement, and how could a trade-union movement be communistic? The traditional meaning of "trade unionism" was unionism aiming to advance the cause of labor within the frame of capitalism, wasn't it? In the second place, "irresponsible" about what? Contracts? Agreements?

"Listen," said my C. I. O. friend, "there are scores of steel industrialists in and around Pittsburgh who have signed up with the S. W. O. C. in the last seven months and are glad of it, and have a high regard for the C. I. O. A few even actively help us in our work. Eight months ago they had arsenals in their mill yards, ready to fight us; now they stand ready to render us favors and services such as we could not get in any other way for love or money. In fact, I'm expecting a call from one of them, who has lately helped us get next to the top men of several companies, which led to the signing of agreements, and who just now is trying to arrange for us a meeting with this fellow who calls us communistic and irresponsible, whom he has known personally for many years. That's what he is to call me about. His name is Robert Paynter—top man in the National Steel, Iron, and Tin Company at Coalburg, eight miles from here."*

My friend answered the telephone: "Yes, Bob. . . . Fine. . . . Uh-huh. . . . I see. . . . O. K.," and so on for several minutes. The contact had evidently been arranged. Then: "By the way, Bob, there's a writer here in my office"—telling him my name and some of the things I had written—"who is interested in the whole situation and would like to talk with you. Could you . . . ?"

Mr. Paynter and I met that afternoon in the air-conditioned Continental Bar of the William Penn Hotel, and we talked for an hour and a half. He is a medium-sized, wiry man with a handsome, square-jawed face; maybe fifty, possibly a few years younger, and obviously very competent. He has a quick eye, a firm handclasp, an agreeable smile, a warm manner, a ready word or remark. Neither frank nor cagy, he lets one draw him out. He dresses conservatively but well, smokes one cigarette after the other, and drinks canned beer of a local brew. The waiter, who knows him, brought him the can and an opener, and Mr. Paynter poured the beer himself into his glass. His company makes beer cans. He evidently doesn't miss a trick.

A successful man. His salary is written in five figures. He lives in one of the suburbs, midway between Pittsburgh and Coalburg. His oldest son is an assistant superintendent in the mill with him, apparently a chip off the old block. A younger boy is at the Phillips Academy in Andover. Mr. Paynter is personally a contented man. He owns a $40,000 home and loves Mrs. Paynter. He reads the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette,* the New York *Times,* the various trade journals pertaining to steel, iron, tin, and

*At his request, the names of this man, his company, and the town are disguised.

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related industries, and *Time, Fortune,* and *Reader's Digest*. The latter he reads in bed evenings or if he wakes up during the night. When very tired or annoyed about something, he likes to read Omar Khayyam; it soothes him.

But most of these personal details about him I learned toward the end of our talk, the significant parts of which went something like this:

Adamic: I understand, Mr. Paynter, that you practically grew up in the steel industry and that you received your early training as a steel man under Tom Girdler.

Paynter: That's right.

A: I am told that in the 1919 steel strike you were, if I may put it bluntly, in charge of a strong-arm force in the mill where you were then an assistant superintendent, and that you did your bit in breaking that strike.

P (*smiling*): That, roughly, is correct.

A: How do you explain that?

P: What do you mean?

A: I mean, how do you justify your 1919 position in relation to labor?

P (*considering the question a trifle silly*): I don't justify it. Nor explain it. Nor apologize for it. Nor regret it, if that's what you mean. That was the thing to do in those days. Everybody—

A: I see. I understand too, Mr. Paynter, that a year ago, or even more recently, you had—shall I say?—an arsenal in the yard of your mill at Coalburg, prepared to give battle to the C. I. O., perhaps much in the way you fought the 1919 strike.

P (*smiling*): "Arsenal" is a big word; apart from that, yes; together with the steel industry as a whole, we were ready to resist unionization.

A: You were prepared to fight it out.

P: Put it that way if you like.

A: Then, what are you doing now, palling around with these C. I. O. reds [*smiling*]—these "Communists," as your former superior, Mr. Girdler, calls them? What do you mean helping the C. I. O. agitators, as I am told you are, to organize the steel industry—calling their office, and so on?

P (*chuckling, pouring beer*): We got converted, Mr. Adamic.

A: How? Why? By whom? When?

P (*laughing*): There's nothing you don't want to know, is there?

A: Well, anyhow, what started you on this new path?

P: One day early last spring a man came to my office—a C. I. O. organizer from the S. W. O. C. office; nice fellow, with a clean-cut, intelligent face, neatly dressed, and so on. He told me right off who he was and what he wanted to talk about. I asked him to sit down, and he began to sell me the idea of us letting the C. I. O. start a union in our plant. He implied it would be to our advantage. Talking very calmly, persuasively, he proceeded to tell me—quite accurately, by the way—all the petty troubles and pains in the neck we'd had in the mill in the past few weeks, which in the long run, he hastened to point out to me, amounted to a lot of trouble and expense, which, he further lost no time in emphasizin , were bound to increase as the years went by regardle s of how good a personnel manager we had. Why? Bec se, he said, in shops where the union was fought an men belonged to it secretly all sorts of damned thi gs happened all the time, which led to fear, nervousnes and jitters among the men, to secret sabotage and oafing on the job, and so on. What he was saying was, to an extent, undoubtedly true, and he proceeded to t ll me, too, that if we let the union come in, it would tal e care of most of our petty labor difficulties. The union, he said, would form a grievance committee consisting workers in the mill; all the union men in the shop w uld be required, and others allowed, to take their grieva ces to the committee, which would assemble all the kic and complaints and what-nots, then take them up wi n us—the management—once every so often, say, once a eek; and many, perhaps most, of the grievances woul be smoothed out by the committee itself without bot ering us with them. He made a good argument, and, ell, to make a long story short, we thought things over, our superintendents and I; we sounded out our biggest stockholders; our directors gave me a free hand; and l y-and-by we said "O.K.," and the C. I. O. came in. W signed an agreement for a year, the union was formed about half the men joined, a grievance committee was rganized, and, sure enough, the thing began to work out —in an imperfect sort of way, to be sure, but we *do* hav fewer petty difficulties with the men, the plant, some ow, does seem generally a better place to work in, an ——

A (*inter upting*): Excuse me, Mr. Paynter—before you go any arther, tell me, was the fact that a C. I. O. organizer ca ne to talk to you *really* the reason why you said "O.K." to the C. I. O.?

P (*his e s flashing amusement*): No-o-o, of course, not really. W e were, naturally, surprised when we read in the pape s early in March about the agreement between Mr. Myron Taylor, of the United States Steel Corporation and Mr. John Lewis. But I don't mind telling you we ere also relieved. Business was picking up beautifully, nd we didn't want a strike which might disrupt pro uction. We are, if I may say so, a successful conc rn, but not a big one; employing between three and fo r thousand men all told. We are completely independent of the United States Steel Corporation, but we have bee having pleasant relations with it ever since I know; I a n personally acquainted with many of its officials, and our policy has always been: What is good for the corp ration is good enough for us. Their labor policy was, t aditionally, our labor policy.

A: Was t ere any other reason that led you to sign up with the . I. O.?

P: Ye-e-e- s, I suppose there was. Our plant at Coalburg is our only plant, and Coalburg is primarily a coal town, w th all the mines closed-shop. All the miners are mem ers of the United Mine Workers, whose president, as you know, is John L. Lewis, who, we know from l ng ago, is a most able man, practical and resourceful, realist, not afraid of a fight. Last year, when the C. . O. began to look like a serious business,

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we realized that by using his miners as pickets, while Mr. Earle was Governor of Pennsylvania [*smiling*], Lewis could close us down and keep us closed, which meant that, since we had no other plant to which we might transfer our important orders, we would be up against it if it came to a showdown. Together with the United States Steel Corporation and the rest of the industry, we could have put up an effective fight and won; and we might have given the C. I. O. a damned good fight and licked it even single-handed, in that we would not sign a contract—but that would have been a case of an irresistible force and an immovable body. Lewis and the C. I. O. would have been licked, but they would have ruined our business. After the battle there would have been very little, if anything, left of the good old National Steel, Iron, and Tin Company. So to fight Lewis—to fight the C. I. O.—was not the constructive thing to do; and after United States Steel entered into an agreement with the C. I. O., and after the C. I. O. man came to us, we said "O.K." and we're not sorry.

A: Why aren't you sorry?

P (*pondering*): Well, we signed an agreement with the S. W. O. C. which provides that we allow the union to organize and any worker to join who wants to, and the union can employ no coercive method to make any worker join who is disinclined to do so. So far, I think, approximately 60 per cent have joined. The rest are holding off from the union out of a variety of motives. Some are individualists who don't believe in unions, others have had unpleasant experiences in unions in other industries or believe that the C. I. O. is communistic, and still others imagine that we, the "bosses," don't really want a union, don't really want them to join; but most of them don't sign up simply because they see no sense of paying union dues when they get all the benefits that the union claims to have won, anyhow. The agreement further provides for certain desirable working conditions, which were in effect before we entered into it, and for certain seniority privileges of workers. The plant remains open-shop; we remain, for the most part, free to hire and fire. Thus far both we and the union—which is still under the general supervision of the S. W. O. C. people, who are fine, able fellows—have been careful to live up both to the letter and the spirit of the agreement. As a matter of fact, on our part, we have done things for the union we have not been required to do. We have given it a building in the mill yard which the union men use as a sort of clubhouse and for committee meetings and collecting of union dues on pay day. The most important thing is the grievance committee, which consists of nine union workers appointed by the S. W. O. C. officers and confirmed by the union membership in the plant. Later on, when the union is better organized, the men will elect their own committees, without direction or suggestion from S. W. O. C. We, the management, had no hand in the formation of this first grievance committee.

A: How does it function?

P: Imperfectly, as I say—it's new; it must be given time. We think that it's liable to be a good thing all around. It seems to act as a sort of collective vent, at least for the union members; in a way, for the whole plant. The men bring their grievances to committee members, then argue about them, then the first thing they know, in many instances, the grievances disappear. One trouble with the thing, so far as we are concerned, is that the men comprising the committee, while granting they probably are as good as we could have, are new, green, inexperienced fellows, apt to get excited about nothing at all. As yet they can't quite handle authority and responsibility. They get "tough" with us over little matters. There seldom is a "grievance meeting" between the committee and the management that something doesn't happen to cause one or all of us on the management side to come near flying off the handle. It is hard, but we try to control our tempers, mend our old pugnacious habits, and be patient. We keep on telling ourselves that the thing—in principle, anyhow—is O.K. and is liable to get better right along. Two of the three men on the grievance committee who are most apt to raise their voices unnecessarily at the grievance meetings are, we feel, open to bribery; that is, we could buy them off, if we wanted to—but, then, why should we? Why should we corrupt the thing?

A: But, then, why not? Employers have been known to corrupt union officials.

P: Yes; but maybe that was one of the serious troubles with industry heretofore—and still is.

A: Of course, I imagine that your troubles, as you see them, with the grievance committee are rather slight, over petty matters and differences. But suppose that sometime in the future you come face to face with more serious problems or demands, what will you do then? Won't you probably be tempted to buy off the officials of the new union?

P (*smiling*): We'll try not to be. Much will depend on how the C. I. O. goes and conducts itself as a whole; what sort of people get at the head of its unions, as it continues to grow, and so on.

A: But suppose—just suppose—that sometime in the future, possibly not very far off, when the C. I. O. is much stronger than it is already, you are presented with a demand for a closed shop and the check-off. What will you do if, or when, that comes?

P: If it comes in the near future, we will oppose it with every means at our command.

A: Why?

P: Because, with things as they are, the closed shop and check-off will not be constructive, will make conditions in the plant impossible. The men are not yet —and, in my opinion, cannot be for some time—sufficiently trained or educated in exercising responsibility, authority, and the necessary self-discipline in a complicated industry like steel. Mind you, as people go, steel workers are good men, but they will have to become much better in every respect—as workers, as human beings—before anything like a closed shop is possible if the industry is to remain progressive and healthy.

A: It may be, too, that there is room for improvement among employers.

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P: Oh, no doubt! But let me say this to you, which I think will cover my attitude to this entire question in a general way: I, for one, am willing to go with the men and this union on the road that seems to lie dimly ahead of the C. I. O. as far as it is constructive.

A: Meaning what?

P: Meaning that I want steel to be made efficiently; that I want the country to be prosperous and progressive, industrially and otherwise; that, working, I want to be able to make a little money; that I want the industrial set-up to be such as to permit new ability to come in and be rewarded. Although, as you know, I am practically a C. I. O. organizer, I am glad that after the Little Steel strike started, Girdler beat the C. I. O. and told a few things to the Administration in Washington. Had the C. I. O. wo that strike, it would have been too much of a good thin for it. Even with that setback, it's growing too fast.

A: Then why do you become, as you say, practically a C. I. O. ganizer?

P: Oh, fo the hell of it.

A: Come come, Mr. Paynter.

P (*smilin*): It's an inconsistency on my part. But, in a way, I a n on the spot among the independents who, following G irdler rather than the United States Steel Corporation have not yet signed up with the C. I. O. They kid a d criticize me; I have to defend myself—and believir offense to be the best defense, I go after them when hey refuse to deal with the S. W. O. C. people.

American Money in Mexico

BY L. O. PRENDERGA T

Mexico City, November 12

THE Mexican New Deal is approaching the crisis that has been implicit in its promises ever since Lázaro Cárdenas transformed the Six-Year Plan from a campaign document into a guide to action. It is obvious that a governmental policy looking toward a more equitable redistribution of wealth and the recovery for the nation of a part, at least, of its natural resources must sooner or later come into collision with the vested interests of the foreigners who own most of the country's instruments of production and virtually control its economic structure.

Mining and oil are the two most important industries in Mexico, with an annual production equal in value to that of all agriculture and to perhaps 60 per cent of all manufactures. Both industries are 90 per cent in the hands of foreigners—Americans, British, Germans, French, and Spaniards. The American Smelting and Refining Company, through its operation of the most important foundries, smelters, and refineries, has an effective monopoly of nearly all mining activity. The Royal Dutch Shell subsidiary in Mexico controls approximately 60 per cent of the total production of crude oil and derivatives; Standard Oil and other American concerns control another 35 per cent; a mere 5 per cent is in the hands of private Mexicans and of the government, which through its newly created but already limping Petroleum Department is attempting to lay the foundations for a conservative policy and, at some unspecified time in the distant future, for the nationalization of the industry.

Mexicans have a larger share in the ownership of manufacturing, but at least 50 per cent of the total production comes from the big enterprises owned by foreigners. Telephone service is in the hands of two foreign companies, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and the Swedish Ericcson trust, in which, incidentally, the A. T. and T. has a 35 per cent interest. Electric ligh and power is divided between the American Electric ond and Share Company and the Mexican subsidiary of Sofina, the international trust centering in Belgium. As a result of their recent nationalization by the governm nt, the railroads have been completely released from he tutelage of the International Bankers' Committee, l eaded by Thomas Lamont, which held the bonds of the railroad debt. The roads now belong to the Mexican gov rnment, but the debt is still outstanding.

In agricul ure the share of foreigners has been less extensive an less immediately visible but is none the less importa t. Except for the henequen (sisal hemp) plantations i n Yucatan, which have been developed largely by na ive capital, practically all modern, mechanized agricult re has been concentrated in large foreign holdings: the cotton and wheat plantations of English, Spanish, and American investors in La Laguna; the American-ow ned sugar estates and refineries in Sinaloa, Puebla, and Vera Cruz; the English and German coffee plantations i Chiapas and Oaxaca; the rice, chickpea, wheat, and t mato ranches of such Yankee bearers of the white ma 's burden as the Richardson Construction Company in Sonora. The remainder of Mexico's agriculture is div ded between the *ejidos,* which constitute as yet only a bare third of the country's arable land and will show wl at they are capable of only when experience has wor ed out a more efficient organization, and the semi-feud l haciendas, the swollen estates given over to extensive ultivation by cheap human labor and an agricultural t chnique that was probably ancient when the pyramid o f Cheops was built.

Thus the s are of the Mexican people in the wealth annually deri ed from production is largely limited to the wages pa l industrial and agricultural workers and the taxes col ected by the government. The result has

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been one of the lowest standards of living in the world. The civilization which the foreign capitalists, in order to justify their exploitation, claim to have brought to Mexico has not reached even 25 per cent of the population. The problems they have raised have penetrated more deeply, and in the effort to find a solution the country lived through a bloody revolution from 1910 to 1920. At first various attempts were made to curb the absolute power over the Mexican workers exercised by foreign employers, and to give the Mexican peon a scrap of land of his own. But after 1927—the year in which Dwight W. Morrow, who was genuinely fond of Mexico but not fond enough to forget his partnership in the House of Morgan, killed the revolution with kindness—such efforts were gradually abandoned, until the coming of Cárdenas.

The ways open to any Mexican government to fulfil the promise of the revolution are simple and well defined. It can give labor freedom of organization and enforce legislation designed to enable it to bargain on terms of approximate equality with its foreign employers. It can apply the Agrarian Code in order to bring about that redistribution of land which every honest student of Mexico in the last quarter-century has recognized as the country's fundamental socio-economic problem. The present administration has courageously sought to do both these things, with results which the world knows. To call this program communism or even socialism is clear evidence of either bad faith or an appalling ignorance of the process of social change. For twenty-five years Mexico has been suffering the pangs of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; that is to say, it has been liquidating its feudal past and establishing the bases of a modern state. An essential part of that process is the modification of the country's semi-colonial status, for true political independence will never be attained until the stranglehold of foreign interests on Mexico's economic life is broken. Both the Mexican Communist Party and the organized labor movement wholeheartedly support this program as one representing real progress over Mexico's wretched past, and their support has given the native reactionaries, in unholy alliance with the imperialist second-story men, their opportunity to raise the red scare and begin advertising for the Mexican Franco.

The legend of Mexican "bolshevism," of reckless disregard for contracted obligations and for the "rights" of foreigners, has been eagerly welcomed in the press abroad. It is saddening to see so competent a journalist as Frank L. Kluckhohn contributing, however innocently, to that legend. In a story in the New York *Times* of November 2 dealing with some of the land expropriations carried out under the Agrarian Code, Mr. Kluckhohn manages to give the impression that the government is proceeding with a sublime disregard for the law, that the Supreme Court is equally contemptuous of the constitution, that Mexico has no intention of paying its debts, that all the land owned by Americans will be seized before Cárdenas leaves office, that Mexico is violating a solemn agreement to pay cash for all lands taken from American citizens, that Washington is not lifting a finger to protect the rights of its nationals in Mexico, that the reserves of the Bank of Mexico are being seriously depleted by the over-ambitious public-works program of the Cárdenas administration, and that an economic crisis is imminent.

Of all these observations, the only one that may turn out to be true is the last, and that for reasons other than those assigned by Mr. Kluckhohn. Land expropriations are proceeding in accordance with the Agrarian Code. You may not like the law or the changes that have recently been made in it, but that is beside the point. A large part of the land in the Yaqui River valley of Sonora, scene of the application of agrarian reform which prompted the *Times* story, was brutally stolen from the Yaqui Indians by the Porfirio Díaz regime thirty years ago and practically given away to American speculators and land companies. Its restitution now is no more than an act of elementary justice. Mexico has never intimated that the bonds given for lands expropriated will not be redeemed, although in my own opinion no good reason for payment of the agrarian debt can be shown to exist. There is no deep-laid scheme to oust all American property holders in Mexico. They are simply being hauled down from their former position of special privilege and consideration. In the past Americans have largely escaped agrarian reform laws because the government was afraid of them. Today the Mexican government is only doing what should long ago have been done by its predecessors: it is deflating the legend of Yankee inviolability and placing Americans on an equal footing with all other landholders.

There is no agreement between the two countries calling for payment in cash for all lands taken from American citizens. I assume that Mr. Kluckhohn is referring—but apparently without being familiar with its history—to the so-called Bucareli Treaty extorted from the Obregón government in 1923 at the point of the non-recognition sword. This treaty provides for no more than cash settlement, as determined by the Mixed Claims Commission set up under it, *for lands expropriated in violation of existing legislation prior to the date of the pact.* In the "exchange of impressions" held by the representatives of both countries negotiating the treaty, it was noted that in the future Mexico intended to make cash payment for the value of agricultural properties expropriated from Americans in excess of 1,755 hectares (4,335 acres). This understanding, however, is not a part of the formal treaty and was never ratified by the Mexican Senate. Hence it is not binding on the Mexican government, and any attempt on the part of Washington to "enforce" it, by threatening to withdraw the recognition supposedly granted in return for that promise, would be considered by most Mexicans a species of political blackmail. Finally, the "expropriated" landholders in Sonora are being given in exchange other lands, irrigated by a newly constructed dam, and, as in the case of the big Laguna companies, cash payment for the value of their investment in machinery, water works, and other improvements.

All that Washington can do to prevent Mexico's ef-

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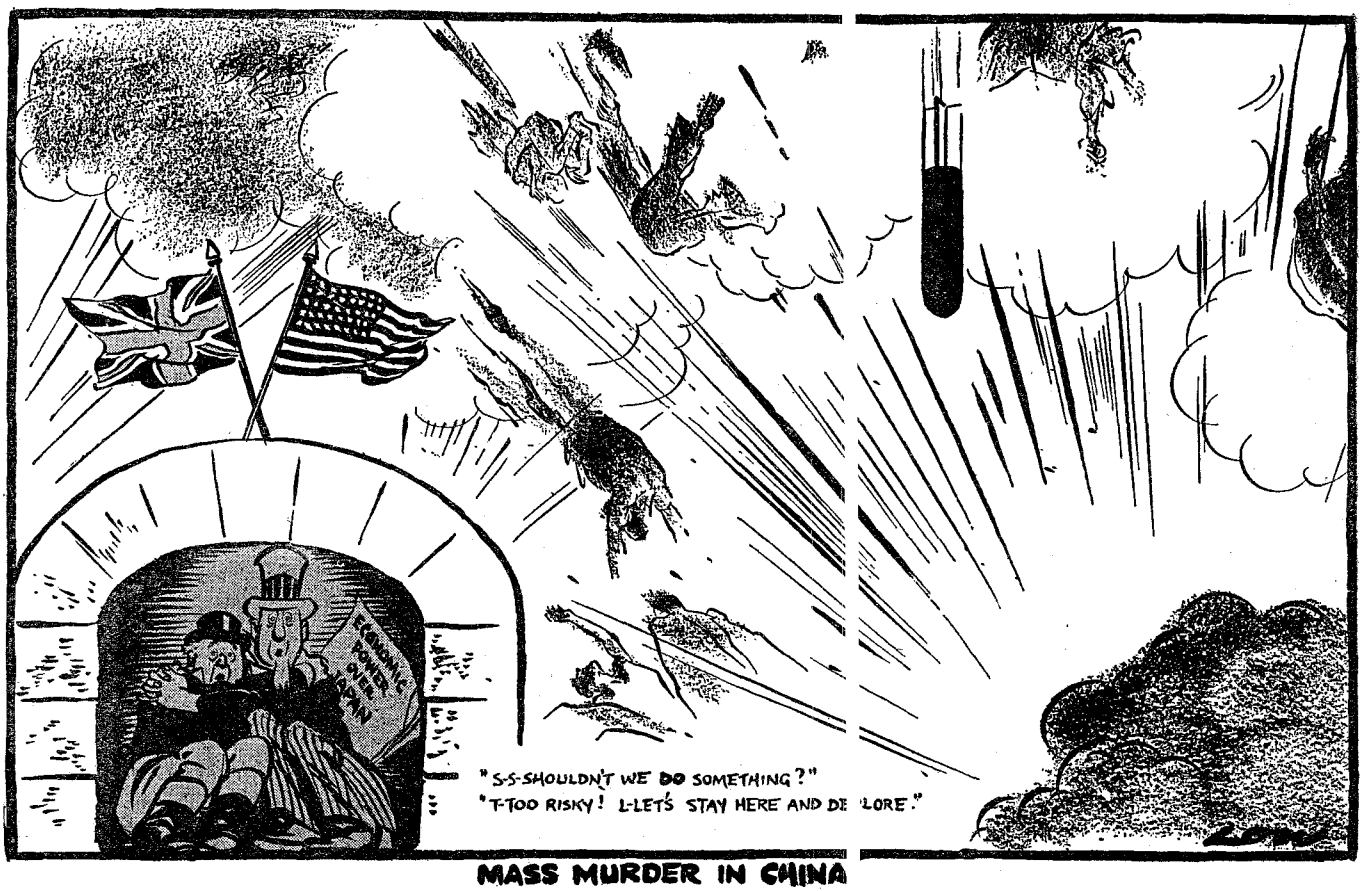
forts to set its house in order is to return to the policy of the big stick. I doubt that the millions of Americans who voted last year for the continuation of Roosevelt's New Deal and the good-neighbor policy with Latin America are pining for a return to the days when Charles Evans Hughes was dubbed "Secretary of Oil" and Frank Kellogg was finding a Bolshevik under every Mexican bed. The property which the State Department is being obliquely invited to protect is the property of the same economic royalists who, in their own elegant phraseology, have "ganged up" on Roosevelt to sabotage the elementary reforms he has attempted to introduce in the United States. The question of Washington's attitude is of more than academic interest. The oil companies here have apparently been encouraged by all the talk of a coming "strong hand" in Washington's Mexican policy to declare open war on the Cárdenas government. In a statement to the press on November 11 they calmly announced that they would refuse to obey the Mexican law if it did not conform to their interests.

An interesting by-product of foreign control of the nation's economy is the rapidly growing anti-Semitic agitation. Mexico's lower middle class, squeezed between the downward pressure of monopoly capital and the upward thrust of the militant labor movement, is developing the customary psychopathic aberrations. The small business men are too blinded by their hatred of labor to recognize that the true exploiters of the whole Mexican people are the giant foreign corporations. A scapegoat had to be found, and was discovered in the Jewish immigrants who have been entering Mexico in relatively large numbers since the World War, although the total Jewish population today does not exceed 15,000. The charges most frequently brought against the Jews—that they operate clandestine industries, pay no taxes, sweat their workers, deal in contraband goods, and engage in cutthroat competition—are in many cases true, but they are equally true of large numbers of highly respected Mexicans and Spaniards. And all these are offenses for which the law already provides penalties; there is no need of special legislation directed against any particular race. This is a policeman's problem, not an ethnologist's.

Anti-Semitism was invented in Mexico by the late-lamented Gold Shirts, an outright fascist organization of former "generals" and gangsters partly supported by Nazi sympathies and funds. It is now being fomented by the more reactionary press, with all the usual talk about the Russian Revolution having been nothing but a Jewish plot hatched in New York. Recently a dubious group calling itself the "Revolutionary Bloc in Defense of Small Business" hornswoggled two senators who should have known better into sponsoring a bill in Congress designed to shut off Jewish immigration, cancel the licenses of Jewish business men, and restrict their residence to certain specified zones—that is, to ghettos. The project was turned over to the Senate Committee on Internal Affairs and in all probability will die there. The Jewish question in Mexico is so microscopic that these outbursts of an artificially stimulated anti-Semitism would be ridiculous were they not symptomatic of the rising tide of fascist sentiment.



MASS MURDER IN CHINA

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

What Is a Liberal?

TWO readers of this page have written to ask me to define liberalism. I told them that they were setting me the hardest possible task. I felt, of course, as complimented as the ragged colored man who was asked to change a ten-dollar bill. But my old inferiority complex stepped in to warn me off. "You will only fail," it whispered to me. Curious how confidential and insinuating our inferiority complexes become! And how they crowd everything else out of the picture. We all of us used to be pestered by a demon called Lack of Self-Confidence, by another known as Indifference, by still another, Laziness, with Cowardice bulking large in the rear. But we pay no attention to them now. We contemptuously ignore them or kick them out of the way. If our conscience troubles us, if we have twinges of remorse, if somebody says, "No matter what your excuses, you know you should have done that," we hastily hide behind our I. C. It covers not only a multitude of sins; if we try hard we can make it cover all our sins.

Speaking of liberals, I wonder if you have all noticed that the embattled democracies abroad are acting today just like the tired post-war liberals and radicals we used to hear so much about? The latter were wont to explain to us when we went to them asking for aid on one or all of the numerous liberal fronts, that they really were emotionally exhausted—sucked dry. They had put all they had in them into opposition to the war or the peace of injustice, or into succoring Belgians, Russians, German babies, Kentucky miners, Tom Mooney. They *had* to insist upon being allowed to lie fallow for a while until they found new wellsprings of compassion, refilled their exhausted reservoirs of hot indignation, found fresh fuel for their reformatory motors. This had a reasonable ring to it; we dissenters did live a decade in those two war years. But the fact is that those reservoirs of indignation never again were filled, those motors which once drove on to unselfish deeds never again possessed the necessary coordinated cylinders hitting at once. Well, so it is with the endangered democracies abroad. They are tired. Their emotional capacity is exhausted. They simply cannot become aroused over anything. Ethiopia leaves them cold. Those poor murdered blacks burned and butchered by bombs from the air and the land—what liberal democratic nation could really get excited about them? Were they not half-naked savages, 70 per cent of them disease-ridden, syphilitic, capable of most horrible cruelties toward their own slaves? Why get excited about *them?*

Before I define a liberal, let me speak of Spain. When one beholds the horrible suffering there, the wanton butchery by rank outsiders of men, women, and children, the utter, the damnable ruin of a historic people guilty only of seeking to leap from feudalism into modern social liberty at one bound, one wishes there were a just and omnipotent God in heaven to behold what has come over those tired democracies. They cannot move. They cannot rouse themselves. They cannot damn as one man the foreign authors of that misery. And now China. Look way over there? Nothing much worse than Spain. And those are yellow men. They do not suffer as we do. They have not our sensibilities, or our fear of death. Death to them is normal. It comes to millions of them at a time from hunger, from the swollen waters, from the locusts, or because the gods withhold the rain. Oh, no. These democracies must not rouse themselves, must not burn with unabatable wrath at wholesale torture and unbelievable wrong, dictated only by the desire of madmen to rob others of what is theirs. They might themselves be drawn in. And we? Well, our American liberals say that in behalf of these democracies we must go to war and sacrifice our youth abroad!

Now as to what a liberal is—excuse me, one minute more. Have you noticed that those democracies for which we are to fight are ruled, so Norman Angell writes in the current *Forum,* by "drift, inertia, indecision, shortsightedness, division of council, disunity, the refusal to make material sacrifice"? That their enemies, who openly demand the complete destruction of democracy everywhere, are actuated by "immense energy, courage, boldness, a readiness to take great risks and undergo infinite suffering, an amazing capacity for sacrifice"—all on behalf of "gross aggression and conquest, the destruction of freedom, of the right of self-government and democracy, the very enthronement of ruthless cruelty and oppression"? Doesn't that sound familiar? We used to use just such phrases to rouse the tired liberal for the sake of the victims of injustice everywhere.

Somehow or other there seems to be a limit to the capacity of the human mind and the human soul to suffer for others. We read of the horrible massacres in Shanghai and put the story down with no more than a sigh. The first time we see the torn and mangled bodies of women and children in the movies we go home to a restless and troubled night. The next time we are struck by the fact that the horrors are not quite as terrible as in the first film. The fourth or fifth time we are affected hardly more than by the pictures of a wrecked airplane.

Oh, yes, about that liberal. Hang it all, the page is done and there isn't any room to tell you what I really think a liberal is. But I shall get around to it, just bear with me. I shall define that liberal from A to Z and pin him lifelike to a card like a butterfly in a museum—what's left of him. So good-day to you!

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BOOKS and the ARTS

LIPPMANN AGONISTES

BY MAX LERNER

"THE GOOD SOCIETY"* marks Walter Lippmann's renunciation of the earlier Lippmann and his consolidation of the latter-day Lippmann. It marks also his renunciation of the latter-day liberalism and his plea for a return to the earlier liberalism of the Western world. There are thus a pair of dialectical processes at work in the book simultaneously. The author is fighting the new order and arguing for the Golden Age of the old order: but he is also and at the same time arguing against the premises of the younger Lippmann and making explicit a new set of premises for the older Lippmann. It is no accident that the book bears on its title-page a text from Milton's "Samson Agonistes." Where could one find a better prototype than in Samson the Wrestler for the man of godlike strength who has known happier days, who now finds himself in the philistine world of collectivist principles, and who out of an inner clarity of sight finds the strength for a last and mighty single-handed effort to tear down the pillars of the totalitarian temple? The whole mood of the book is that of the Hebrew prophets. It begins with a devastating attack upon the collectivisms of the day as the Sodom and Gomorrah that have brought mankind to its present pass. It continues with a passionate defense of the older liberalism ("If I forget thee, O Jerusalem . . ."). And it ends in an apocalyptic vision of a future society in which men are once more free.

At forty-eight Mr. Lippmann has behind him a quarter-century crowded with writing and political activity. He divides his career into three parts: the years before the Great War, when he assumed "that in a regime of personal liberty each nation could, by the increasing exercise of popular sovereignty, create for itself gradually a spaciously planned and intelligently directed social order"; the years of "blundering improvisations" of "a rather bewildered man" that followed the war; and the present period, in which the direction that the collectivist movements have taken has forced him to reexamine what he believes and state it, as he does in this book, with finality.

A man should be allowed his own autobiographical schema, and I shall not quarrel with Mr. Lippmann's. But to think and to say that one has achieved a final clarity is not the same as to have achieved it. Mr. Lippmann clothes incredibly naive statements with a magisterial solemnity; he takes the platitudes of individualist capitalism and dresses them up in fine verbal raiment until they almost look like something else. A mind moving toward maturity must learn to make distinctions before it makes syntheses; it must learn to discriminate before it cond mns, and to be realistic before it affirms. Yet Lippmann has in the course of his writings extended the sphere of l is aversions and antipathies until he labels everything he does not like as "totalitarian." He has stripped hims lf of most of what he once knew about the fatal lesio s and contradictions of laissez faire capitalism, until e has now come to equate it with the eternal values f human freedom. The intellectual world in which this ook moves is arid, mechanical, and in a final sense rea tionary.

Lippmann's basic premise is that no human being or group of hum n beings can know or grasp their social world—the G eat Society. He finds the thought of the complexity of government today overwhelming. And in his recoil fron the coercions of political power that he sees around hi n he flees to the Nirvana of political inaction. His rer edy for the social chaos which the regime of individuali t capitalism and the free market have brought in th ir wake is a homeopathic one—more of the same thin Like the Manchester Liberals to whom he looks back ith an eloquent nostalgia, he has a horror of government l power, and a belief in a "higher law" and some mys ical guiding hand that will bring order out of chaos. When Lippmann seeks to translate the Great Society nto the Good Society, his basic program is to make all overnmental power judicial power; even legislators wo ld be essentially judges, and the basic mechanisms of government would be by litigation when any individual considers himself injured. Carlyle had a term for such overnment when it was advocated by the Manchesterian: He called it "anarchy plus a constable."

There are tw o antiphonal strains in the book. One is the dissection f collectivism; the second is the defense of liberalism. Mr. Lippmann manages to bungle both jobs woefully. n the first one he is never quite certain whether he is t lking of dictatorship, economic planning, or the various artial forms of government intervention in the economi process. To attack political dictatorship is one thing; tc attack a planned economy quite another; to link the tw explicitly is a writer's privilege, if he can defend his thesis; and to bring every form of government contro of industry into the same picture would be to fashion a political theorist's nightmare. But when Mr. Lippmann huttles back and forth from one type of collectivism to nother, treating them all as qualitatively alike and attril uting—by implication—fascist brutality and militarism o the U. S. S. R. and the scope of Soviet economic plan ing to the mild measures of the New Deal, one can o ly gasp at the shambles of undistributed

* "The Good Society." By Walter Lippmann. Little, Brown and Company. $3.

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middles. What Mr. Lippmann is in effect doing, whether he knows it or not, is to brand with the fascist stigma every attempt of mankind to carve out a good society for itself by conscious social action. If his book were not so confused as to be ineffective, it would be dangerous. For by presenting as the only alternatives a totalitarian dictatorship on the one hand and an individualist capitalism on the other, he consigns the future of mankind to the terribly weak props of a laissez faire economy. Since those props are certain to collapse, the final prospect we are confronted with is fascism. Actually, man's fate lies with a whole variety of socialisms and partial collectivisms that are yet unexplored.

It is in the second of his antiphonal strains, his discussion of liberalism, that Lippmann is weakest. He regards all of human history as a preparation for the century between Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" and the British social-welfare legislation starting in the 1870's. Before Smith wrote, mercantilism exercised a tyranny over men. After 1870 a new form of mercantilism reasserted its tyranny. The century becomes thus an all too brief interval of liberal light between two darknesses. The world presumably took the wrong turn in 1870 and has been going in the wrong direction ever since. Mr. Lippmann offers no explanation of the wrong turn. If he were not writing a tirade against Marxism, he might have seen that the century he speaks of was the century of an expanding industrial capitalism in England, when England became the center of the world market and the distributing point of goods to countries with inferior industrialisms. When the other countries developed their own industrial technique, the world market began to break down; and meanwhile English capitalism, entering a contracting phase, had to be bolstered and regulated by state action. The social-service state succeeded the laissez faire state, and Mill's partial socialism succeeded Ricardo's individualism.

It should be noted that Mr. Lippmann is not against social control as such. The "good society" he depicts is riddled with social controls and cluttered with legal controls through litigation; all that it lacks is governmental control in the economic sphere. I can only assume that Mr. Lippmann, in his proposal for stripping away all governmental controls except those of the common law, is writing with a naive innocence of legal history. Otherwise he would know that what he proposes is exactly what has been tried and has failed. The history of the common law is the tragic record of the attempt to build a system of economic order in an industrial society on a system of legal procedure meant to catch petty thieves and dishonest hucksters in a precapitalist economy. It was because the jury and the writs and the injunctions were a complete failure that we have had to build up our complex body of administrative law.

The author pleads his case, let it be added, with integrity. I do not subscribe to the theory, held by some of my contemporaries, that Walter Lippmann has "sold out." It is a foolish theory, unless it is used in so unconscious a sense as to be stripped of meaning. Lippmann has not had to sell out. He has been able to adhere to the ideals of his liberalism and the idols of the marketplace at the same time, for the two are good companions. The compass of his thinking has swung round under the pressure of events from the liberalism of the left to the liberalism of the right; the catchwords have remained the same, but the content is the opposite of what it was. Mr. Lippmann is a rich man; his friends are the possessors of the earth; he is their prophet. What obscure psychological bolstering he finds in them it is beyond my competence to guess; they find in him, as the possessors of the earth have for centuries found in the liberalism of the right, a rationalization of their economic claims and their political fears. Mr. Lippmann's brand of liberalism is the intellectual garment of capitalist power; it is the liberalism of the Supreme Court majorities, of the business men who call for a determined but muted predacity, of the professors and editors and lawyers who want at the same time to preserve the status quo and their self-respect. It is not the dishonest intellectuals who are the best servants of bankers and industrialists today. It is those who cling with the fiercest sincerity to a body of principles that represent the death's-head of capitalist power dressed up in its Sunday best.

BOOKS

Reporting Washington

THE WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS. By Leo C. Rosten. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.

BY THE aid of a fellowship of the Social Science Research Council Mr. Rosten has put under the microscope and most carefully analyzed 154 men, of whom 127 answered the long questionnaire he submitted to them. These 154 men are the Washington correspondents of the chief American newspapers and press associations, the stars of the reporting profession, from whom the American public gets a large portion of its political news. Anything, therefore, which assays this group, its working conditions, its bias, its equipment, is valuable, though I confess I found myself little interested in knowing how many of them had fathers who were professional men and how many were the sons of laboring men. It is more worth while to know how many of them have college educations, how few of them, only 9.4 per cent, regularly go to church, and how many of them read *The Nation* (34.1 per cent) and the *New Republic* (26.8 per cent). More important is Mr. Rosten's analysis of the influences by which the correspondents are surrounded, their subservience to their home offices, or their independence, and their attitude toward their profession and professional obligations, for here we come to grips with the fundamentals, especially in the presentation of news.

It is idle to expect that the Washington correspondent will be immune from all home, political, and social influences and report all happenings without partisanship. As Mr. Rosten points out, the newspaperman is singularly sensitive to the point of view of the owner of the daily he serves. He rarely is told how he must write. But if he joins Colonel Knox's Chicago *Daily News,* he knows without being told what kind

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For readers who can't see the forest for the trees...

IN A BUSY PUBLISHING SEASON readers are often unable to see the forest for the trees. We should like to take the liberty of pointing out a few books which we believe will especially appeal to *Nation* readers. Some of them are just out, some are still to be published (in the next week); all of them are worthy of your attention for one reason or another, and all of them are made according to the Random House standards of design and printing, which are high.

Professor Harry Elmer Barnes' monumental work, AN INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE WESTERN WORLD ($5.00), is a thoroughly valuable volume which presents an ordered picture of the arts and sciences, from the earliest times to our own. The new Random House DE QUINCEY ($3.50) is a notable addition to the beautiful One-Volume series. *P. E. Q. Quercus* of the *Saturday Review* puts it "at the top of my private Christmas list." Just off press also is the Random House edition of *Louis Hacker's* A GRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES ($2.50).

Among the important novels of the year, *Morley Callaghan's* MORE JOY IN HEAVEN ($2.50) and *Liam O'Flaherty's* FAMINE ($2.50) surely stand out. THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A SPANISH TOWN by *Elliot Paul* ($2.50) is having a tremendous sale and a great influence on America's sympathies in the Spanish conflict.

In the field of poetry, Random House has been privileged to present the first new work in several years by *Robinson Jeffers*, SUCH COUNSELS YOU GAVE TO ME ($2.50) and a first volume by a new poet, *Louis MacNeice* ($2.50) who belongs in the Auden-Spender group.

In lighter vein there is the new 1937 NEW YORKER ALBUM ($2.50) and the plays, I'D RATHER BE RIGHT, *Odets'* GOLDEN BOY, and AMPHITRYON 38, each $2.00. *Gene Fowler's* riotous novel SALUTE TO YESTERDAY ($2.50) is leaving a wake of laughter in its progress across the country.

Eight new titles have been added to the MODERN LIBRARY, including *J. B. Bury's* famous HISTORY OF GREECE, and a complete *Hawthorne*. These are Giants, $1.25 each. The additions to the regular series (at 95¢) include *John Steinbeck's* TORTILLA FLAT, *Virginia Woolf's* TO THE LIGHTHOUSE, and *John Dos Passos'* THE 42nd PARALLEL, as well as a comprehensive one-volume edition of *Thoreau*. We suggest that you send for a complete list of Modern Library books; they will make inexpensive and appreciated gifts.

NEW!

EVERYBODY'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY
by Gertrude Stein

The sequel to *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, told in Miss Stein's most lucid vein and with a good deal of sly humor in its portraiture. It brings her story right down to date. Illustrated with photographs by Carl Van Vechten. $3.00.

VERTIGO
by Lynd Ward

Lynd Ward's crowning achievement, a novel which is genuinely exciting and dramatic—a story "told in works of art." $3.00.

LETTERS FROM ICELAND
by W. H. Auden and Louis MacNeice

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of news Colonel Knox is particularly interested in and how he would like the news presented. Similarly when I managed the New York *Evening Post*, the men who wrote for me knew what my hobbies and my beliefs were, and that I was not particularly interested in presenting reactionary arguments and orations. Washington correspondents are human beings, after all, and subject to the usual influences. On the whole Mr. Rosten has depicted the situation with extraordinary accuracy. I think, however, that he fails to stress adequately the social influences brought to bear upon the correspondent and the dilemma which confronts the honest reporter in the capital.

I have known men there who would not meet socially any people in political life for fear that such contacts would unconsciously color whatever they might write about these politicians. On the other hand, to refuse to associate with the politicians is to lose the opportunity to know them thoroughly, to understand their characters, and to obtain many leads and tips and news stories. Men decide this question according to their own judgment. Often, as Mr. Rosten points out, the correspondents step out of their role of reporters and help to make news or to shape legislation. Here again I think Mr. Rosten fails to emphasize sufficiently this aspect of the Washington work. He does not, for example, point out what a great public service Paul Anderson rendered in digging up the Teapot Dome frauds and starting the whole train of events which led to the unveiling of the oil scandals.

On the whole, however, this is a very competent study, the Ph. D. type of research. It leaves the field open for a book that will deal less with the technicalities of Washington reporting and more with the personalities of the members of the corps and their actual achievements. But as a reference volume Mr. Rosten's thesis will have lasting value.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

E. S. P.

NEW FRONTIERS OF THE MIND. By J. B. Rhine. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

DR. RHINE, in his experiments which have become famous, proves the existence of extra-sensory perception in the following manner: He shuffles a deck of twenty-five cards consisting of five sets of symbols, five in each set (five circles, five crosses, five waves, five squares, five stars). The subject, separated from the deck of cards by meters or miles, must guess the sequence, card for card. According to the theory of probability the subject would guess correctly an average of five cards out of twenty-five if repeated experiments were made. However, the use of the theory of probability has already been strongly attacked in this case. Be this as it may, some of Dr. Rhine's subjects strike a higher average, guessing six cards out of twenty-five; and in three out of hundreds of thousands of experiments the entire sequence of the cards was guessed correctly. According to Dr. Rhine, this cannot be a matter of chance but must be due to "extra-sensory perception," or, as Dr. Rhine calls it with rationalized mysticism, "E. S. P."

The situation is both embarrassing and paradoxical for the reviewer: embarrassing because he cannot oppose a single experiment of his own to Dr. Rhine's hundreds of thousands; paradoxical because his skepticism is based on instinct, while Dr. Rhine, the mystic, appeals to experience. The mystic seems to be the progressive, the skeptic, the conservative.

How would you examine the girl who roomed next to you if she were to come to you with the news that she could tell what you were doing in your room in spite of the wall between? Would you give her five cards always bearing the same symbols? Would you give her the advantage of the chance to make a hit each fifth time? Would you tell her in advance what kind of symbols she would have to guess each time? On the contrary, your method would be more natural and more severe. "All right," you would say, "go to your room, Miss Black." And now you would put on the table in rotation a rose, a mustard-pot, yourself, a painting by Van Gogh; and each time you would call out: "Please, Miss Black, what was it this time?" Now if Miss Black really recognized the mustard-pot as a mustard-pot in spite of the intervening wall, then you would take off your hat or rent another room or employ Miss Black as a detective. If, however, she identified the mustard-pot as "The Last Supper" by Leonardo "quite plainly," then you would give her politely to understand that you had nothing to fear from her. Until Miss Black has corroborated Dr. Rhine's results we have no reason to accept them.

Although more natural and more amusing, the method I have outlined is equally as scientific as Dr. Rhine's. It can also be repeated a hundred thousand times. It also has its probability quotient. However, its value is equal to zero, because it is as good as out of the question that anyone will guess the mustard-pot, although by this method one hit would represent a tremendously powerful proof, much more powerful than the hits in the experiments of Dr. Rhine.

If there is such a thing as extra-sensory experience, why should it be confirmed by insignificant playing cards with which man has no vital contacts at all? Nothing is more important in testing an ability than the right choice of the object. The ability of man to love is not tested by his relation to matches. The child knows how to find the mother's breast without ever having seen it before. Here we have a vital and at the same time *presensory* relation. Even the examples given by Dr. Rhine himself to explain the necessity of his experiment are examples of *vital* nearness which make sensory experience, analogous to instinct, relatively unnecessary. His experience with media proved the same. Nevertheless, instead of testing the plausible relation between *intimacy* and telepathy, he tests the ability to identify pasteboard cards.

Let us assume, for argument's sake, that our neighbor, Miss Black, really "saw" successfully. She did not see anything supernatural. She saw only playing cards or mustard-pots. It is important to emphasize this in order to prevent the Rhine experiments from being wrongly exploited, not least by Dr. Rhine himself. What was unusual in Miss Black's case, assuming her success, was that she had an experience independent of individual organs.

It is our everyday experience to transfer to our minds pictures of the world outside us. Yet it is not the pictures that hit our eyes and ears but innumerable physical stimuli which only later are converted into pictures. Whether these stimuli act upon the individual organ or, in a manner as yet not tested, on all of Miss Black, whether the eye or the entire organism does the converting, is of secondary importance; even though it may be interesting to investigate this organism that works like one organ.

E. S. P. becomes miraculous—and then in a very suspicious sense—only if any and all physical relation between Miss Black and the playing cards or the mustard-pot is denied and the relation is represented as "purely spiritual." This is what Dr. Rhine does, enthusiastically, and when he does so he is no longer standing on scientific ground.

G. S. ANDERS

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International Brigade

VOLUNTEER IN SPAIN. By John Sommerfield. Alfred A. Knopf. $1.50.

JOHN SOMMERFIELD can write. And not only about the stridencies of war but of the sudden hush that comes over any sensitive mind engaged in that enterprise. Test him by any episode, before he reaches battle or afterward; for instance, the train journey through France on page 11, when his excitement mounts to its proper expression in his description of the train's passage through the night:

> The endless movement of shattered calm that spread out like a wake into sleeping countrysides, trembling upon the windows of farmhouses and across shivering grass, freezing small animals into stillness . . .

Or again, in a detail, he catches the exact way in which a French tough sighs the word *Merde* and places him as that very type of haggard and wistful melancholy, the circus boy to whom Picasso has given perpetuity.

It is not simply war which Sommerfield is thus approaching; he is going to join the International Brigade. As I write, carpenters are banging in the next room, white paper is under my hand; normally these things are more vivid to me now than the war in Spain, even if images go by of the red-black, windy ghost of burning Villanueva, or the shot-away stork's nest tumbling on to dead men from Brunete tower. But when an old I. B. man says "International Brigade" he is in the line. And Sommerfield's book has that quality throughout. He makes you feel again what we all felt, that entry into the I. B. was like stepping into the living stream of history, that it was the substantial and glorious embodiment of the tradition of struggling peoples. We could sing "C'est la lutte finale" with a new and joyous feeling. Was it, is it simply a defense of bourgeois democracy?

You run up against the sense of embodied tradition throughout the book. Take the passage on page 41, where rifles are handed out:

> I experienced a pang of delight, something far deeper than any sensation that could simply have been caused by the fact of having a rifle; and it certainly had nothing to do with any feelings about being able to kill people with it; it was something else, something that because of long-held beliefs and feelings made this moment significant, a fulfilment that came with a sense of inevitability, so that I suddenly realized that all along I had expected it to happen, that the moment would come . . . in which I would find myself with a rifle in my hand to defend the things in which I believed.

Many will read this book out of romantic wish-fulfilment; why shouldn't they? They will learn what it feels like to be a soldier of the world's good fortune, for this book is honest about war. The English were singing "She was poor but she was honest" while the wondering French listened. Song of oppressed and downtrodden people, sung by the English; and immediately, in the same paragraph, Sommerfield records with precision the before-battle state of mind, the wild joy, the troubled delight, when a man examines his courage and probes into his fear of death.

Everything seems to be in this short book. During that long, brilliant bleakness of Jarama the boys must have asked me a hundred times to get them oil to clean the carbon-pitted rifle barrels. Well, Sommerfield grows a little cocky in one place, because, as he says, he had "the only little bottle of oil in the war, I believe." At the other end of the scale read what he says on page 115 about the exact sort of degradation he felt during one of those crises of mind-

"Description of a miracle."

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BY RAMON J. SENDER

"SENDER'S BOOK, let me say deliberately, is easily the best that has come out of Spain as yet. It has well nigh everything. Sender, one of the most interesting writers of contemporary Spain, has had the immense opportunity of courage. He has taken part in exciting battles and he is so convinced a democratic idealist that he can write dispassionately of them; or to say it better, his passions are utterly honest. In this book of Sender's the reader will find a trustworthy way into a tremendous experience." — *Ralph Bates*, author of "Lean Men" and "The Olive Field" *in the Saturday Review.* $3.00

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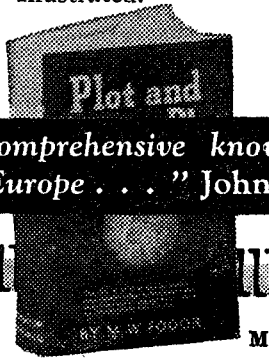

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murdering horror when the trembling body aches for just one moment of quiet withdrawal from the uproar. There is no rhetoric in "Volunteer in Spain," but there is thrilling description and a sensitively organized procession of imagery, and sometimes there comes a passage of moving poetry, as in the beautiful section on the night by the lonely river. He was moved there, and I believe grateful in all his heart to feel, during that mortal and searching hush, the old stirring of the sense of beauty; one can feel it in his words. Strange amalgam of fear and joy, of superficial cynicism and cemented belief, of simplicity and revolutionary ardor, of toughness and tenderness; this is a book of the International Brigade.

RALPH BATES

Thoreau Revisited

THE WORKS OF THOREAU. Selected and Edited by Henry S. Canby. Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.

WALDEN, AND OTHER WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. Edited by Brooks Atkinson. Modern Library. 95 cents.

THESE two books, published almost simultaneously, provide the ordinary reader with nearly all that he will ever need of Thoreau's writing. Both of them include "Walden" entire, most of "A Week," and parts of "Cape Cod." Both wisely exclude "A Yankee in Canada," and, not so wisely, the "Familiar Letters." In the larger volume there is a generous representation of Thoreau's Journals, skilfully rearranged and "compounded" according to topics. Mr. Atkinson's collection is a book for the pocket and knapsack. Mr. Canby's, intended for the library shelves, attempts much more, but does not justify its title. It does not comprise "the works of Thoreau" in a "one-volume edition" but is a selection from those works, and to some extent a rearrangement of them, according to one man's opinion of what Thoreau was and had to say. As such, it is a job well done.

Writers about Thoreau have seldom managed to be moderate in praise or blame of him, perhaps because he was himself habitually violent in both of these emotional indulgences. We tend just now to overpraise him, as if to atone for a long misunderstanding, or, it may be, to hold him up as a shining example of certain American virtues which are now in danger. Regarding him, correctly, as the ideal opposite of our pusillanimous Babbittry, we sometimes allow ourselves to speak of him as though he had been in all ways deeply wise and greatly good. But Henry Thoreau has had champions enough. Now he needs critics who will present him for what he really was: a man of high fortitude, noble character, and fine intelligence, but yet a man harsh, angular, acrid, bristling with faults and prejudices, and not a little bewildered by a world which he hardly tried to understand.

There is more of championship than of criticism in the editorial introductions to these two volumes. Mr. Canby calls Thoreau "a poet-naturalist . . . probably the best in any literature." One thinks of Lucretius, Maurice de Guérin, Richard Jefferies, Edward Thomas, and W. H. Hudson. Mr. Atkinson says that because Thoreau's mind was clear he stated facts accurately. One remembers Thoreau's assertion, in "Cape Cod," that the English downs are made of sand. One recalls his frequently absurd etymologies and his lifelong confusion of the hermit thrush with the wood thrush. Mr. Atkinson avers that Thoreau, at his best, "wrote the most vigorous and pithy prose in American literature." Mr. Canby believes that "Thoreau's best prose is as good as any written in his century," and, indeed, that "it is the best American prose ever written." With such assertions of personal taste there can be no disputing, although there may be strong disagreement among those who recall the prose style of Landor, Newman, Huxley, or Hawthorne. Anyone can discover for himself, however, that the prose of Henry Thoreau is deficient in the chief of all prose virtues—that is, in concatenation, architectonic, or what the French call *ordonnance*. Often powerful and brilliant in the single sentence, he is weak in paragraph structure and incapable of building larger literary units. For this reason he never made a book that holds together, or even a well-rounded essay. At his best he was a writer of *pensées*, a lesser Joubert, and not a master of prose style in its larger and more difficult constructions.

Thoreau's style was emphatic rather than clear, and his thought shows rather an extravagant violence than a patient energy. Like many other men of his time he was, for good and for ill, a highly self-conscious rhetorician, often more concerned with the sound of a phrase than with its innermost meaning, and more anxious for the effect he was making than for the sober truth. Even about himself and his own work in life his thought was confused and inconsistent. The fact appears to be that he simply did not have the strength whereby a really first-rate mind wins ultimately through to clear self-knowledge and to mastery of its means of expression.

Under these circumstances one can understand the confusion of Thoreau's editors and critics. On one and the same page Mr. Canby says that Thoreau was "a Puritan in the best sense of that word" and also that he was "determined to do what he wanted." But one had thought of the Puritan as a person determined to act not according to his own private will—a thing that may be said of any criminal—but rather according to the will of God. Mr. Canby also tells us that Thoreau's controlling purpose was "to set forth in words 'the perfect correspondence of Nature to man.' " The phraseology is imposing, but the record of Thoreau's life seems to show that he worked at this high task in a strangely intermittent way, and also that he understood the Swedenborgian doctrine of "correspondence" rather vaguely if at all.

With these defects, however, Henry Thoreau remains one of the most stimulating, companionable, and enduring writers that this country has produced. His influence, already great, will be extended by these two books.

ODELL SHEPARD

DRAMA

The Mercury Theater

LAST week I had occasion to speak of a production of "Antony and Cleopatra" which, as it turned out, closed before my review appeared. It cost, I am told, well over $100,000, and the best way to forget the whole unfortunate business is to consider instead the performance of "Julius Caesar" at Orson Welles's new Mercury Theater. Mr. Welles, with his bare stage and his actors costumed in the conventional clothes of today, must have spent about as little as it is possible to spend on a commercial production for Broadway,

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but he has achieved a performance which nearly everyone appears to find as absorbing as any seen in New York for many a year.

Probably all Shakespeare's plays could be performed far better upon a bare platform than surrounded, as they usually are, by paraphernalia which seem to have been designed by someone without the slightest sense of what will emphasize and what will muffle or impede the action. But the beauty of this particular performance lies not merely in its simplicity but in the adaptation of that simplicity to the requirements of a specific work. Probably none of the other plays by Shakespeare is as simple and direct as this one. If it is profound at all it is profound only in the bare Roman fashion. There are no fancies and few Elizabethan overtones. There are no meanings which the words do not express, and neither do the words ever mean or even suggest more than the action requires. Thus the whole play is a perfect piece of rhetoric in the sense that the expression is, without excess or defect, adequate to the thing said. Moreover, the story is a perfectly straightforward story of a conspiracy which went wrong for the simple reason that conspiracy, being a corrupt thing, usually attracts to itself men who are corrupted. As acted on Mr. Welles's bare stage, it tells that story and suggests that truth without doing or attempting to do more. From the vague night of dark recesses the characters emerge into the light to say their say or do their deeds, and that is enough not merely to hold an audience tense through an hour and three-quarters of uninterrupted action, but to send them away carrying in their minds both the meaning and the feel of conspiracy in a tottering world.

Caesar and his aides are costumed in modern military uniforms, but the effect of that is chiefly only what the effect of modern dress was in the "Hamlet" performed here some years ago. Everyday dress helps the actors to feel that the speeches are to be spoken, not intoned like rituals, and it is soon accepted by the audience as a convention rather easier to accept than costumes too unfamiliar not to be distracting. Perhaps Mr. Welles means it to go a little bit farther by helping to suggest a parallel between the dying republic of Rome and the world of today, in which dictators are rising much as Caesar rose; but there is no forcing of the parallel and no distortion of Shakespeare's play to point a modern moral. Mr. Welles does give his conspirators the turned-up coat collars and turned-down hat brims, as well as the threatening, impassive faces, which we have come to associate with gangsters, but the effect which he gets seems to me perfectly legitimate, and with only a slight modification of the original he makes the overwhelming of the poor foolish poet, Cinna, an unforgettably sinister thing. If this "Julius Caesar" is not precisely that of the Elizabethans it emphasizes nothing which any modern reader of the play could well avoid seeing in it.

Mr. Welles promises a series chosen from a list which includes "Henry IV" and "The Duchess of Malfi." Neither the one nor the other could be successfully played in precisely the same manner as "Julius Caesar," but unless the performance of the latter is the result of almost incredible good fortune it is not likely that either will be; for the most encouraging thing about the whole enterprise is the conviction one gets that the opening performance is not the result of devotion to some cult of stagecraft but of an imagination which grasped the fact that "Julius Caesar" could be effectively played in precisely this manner.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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RECORDS

MAHLER'S talents were not suited to his aspirations: preoccupied with large philosophical themes, he wished to carry on the tradition of large-scale symphonic construction, when by musical nature he was a lyricist and as such a composer of small forms. This is true also of Brahms, whose best works are his sets of variations in which he produces a large form by the process of writing a cumulative series of small ones; and one of the finest of these sets, the Variations on a Theme of Haydn, superbly performed by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony under Toscanini, has been issued in a two-record set ($4.50) by Victor. Mahler's talents, on the other hand, find their inevitable employment in his song-cycles, and most impressively in "Das Lied von der Erde." "Impressive" is intended here in its literal sense: I am impressed by the feeling which the work communicates, the highly individual processes of Mahler's musical thinking, his individual use of the resources of music for his purpose. Columbia has issued a recording (seven records, $14) of an actual performance of the work by the Vienna Philharmonic with Kerstin Thorborg and Charles Kullman under the direction of Bruno Walter. The performance is excellent; Thorborg's singing, in particular, is magnificent; and the recording is very good except for the sharpness of the violins that was noticeable in Walter's recording of Brahms's Third, and that can be reduced somewhat by use of cactus needles.

I looked forward to hearing the English madrigals issued by Columbia in a three-record set ($3.50), and was disappointed by the heaviness and insensitiveness in the singing of this exquisitely wrought music. It is written for five voices, and Lehman Engel has recorded it with eighteen—his entire group of Madrigal Singers. If you want to hear Morley's "My bonnie lass she smileth" as it should sound, get the Victor record made by the London Madrigal Group. On the other hand Columbia's two-record set ($3) of Mozart's Trio K. 564 and the second movement of the Trio K. 542 was a delightful surprise: the music is the mature Mozart speaking very simply and charmingly; the playing of Mme Walter Lang, Walter Kagi, and Franz Hindermann has the deceptive simplicity of consummate art. Nor was I prepared for the strange and moving quality of an unfamiliar Chorale-Prelude of Bach, "Das alte Jahr vergangen ist," coupled with "Christ lag in Todesbanden" on a Columbia single ($1). Playing by Edouard Commette and recording are adequate.

With Szigeti one looks forward and is never disappointed; and this time there are superlative performances of Händel's Sonata in D (Columbia: two records, $2) and Mozart's in E minor (one record, $1.50). So with Gieseking's performances of Debussy's "Goldfish" and Ravel's "Ondine" ($1.50). And on still another Columbia single ($1.50) is the charming Gretry-Mottl Ballet Suite beautifully played by the Brussels Conservatory Orchestra under Defauw. As for Victor, it offers a superb record ($2) of the Introduction to Moussorgsky's "Khovantchina" made by the Boston Symphony under Koussevitzky; an excellent new version of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto made by Heifetz and the London Philharmonic under Barbirolli (four records, $8); and a two-record set ($4.50) of Bach's Peasant Cantata No. 212, which I find as boring as anything unearthed by the small independent companies. Victor's surfaces, I regret to report, are now also afflicted with loose residue.

B. H. HAGGIN

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THE ARTS

The Candid Camera

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Certain technical inventions seem at first glance to explain the new craze, notably the invention of the miniature camera. Whatever its own merits or defects, it has revolutionized the whole field, bringing about instruments that work faster, more handily, under conditions recently impossible. Very roughly stated, the "fast" lens in average use today can gather some nine times as much light on the film as the "fast" lens current in 1925; the film itself, meanwhile, is three times as sensitive; the combination of lens and film will, roughly speaking, give a picture with something like a thirtieth of the light once needed, or, with the same light, in a thirtieth of the time. Instantaneous exposures have been speeded to one one-thousandth on the candid cameras, while laboratories figure regularly in the hundred-thousandths. No wonder the new process of photography enlists hobbyists, amateurs, and new professionals in flocks!

And yet, if such were the inventions, what caused *them?* It was the urge to command and preserve an image instantly, anywhere, of anything occurring here or anywhere else, as if one were present to see it with one's own eyes. This aim is still far from realized; but during the past year we have seen it on its way with terrifying vividness. There were people who observed in the Translux Theater one night the horrible burning, before their very eyes, of the Zeppelin they had just seen in the afternoon lazing over a humdrum city.

Artists sensed the aim of photography at the very start, and called it "camera realism." Maybe "actuality" would be a better word. In the news magazines we feel that it is an actual soldier we see struck by an actual bullet in Spain; though the operating room is inaccessible, we see an actual operation on a human brain; the photo-finish shows the race that was too quick for the judges' eyes; we are given no substitute but the wing of an actual pigeon even when its movement is so slowed that we can observe the "feathering" on the return stroke; and we are equally certain of the actual impact of a cosmic ray on an atom of lead.

Now that newspapers can furnish, within an hour, finished prints of events across the continent, transmitted by wire and photo-electric cell; and now that television makes the con-

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nection instantaneous with no intermediary print, outdoing photography at its best, there need be no surprise that our attitude toward the new images is different from our attitude toward artists' inventions. The distinction is vital. Direct contact with actuality is involved in our very survival. Without it we lose power, if not life itself.

This literalness which is the camera's strength must be firmly grasped, because it is also the camera's weakness. The literal is not in itself the real, which is vastly more comprehensive. Great draftsmen have had the advantage of being able to peel off this outer layer of appearances. The literal pictures of the camera need art—a special camera art—to permit us to see through this outer layer, to reach the essence, the inner reality of the scene. The camera is a deceptive and partial conventionalization of the human mechanism of sight. It has a lens but lacks, for example, any equivalent for the sense of touch that organically modifies all our own mental images. The result is a series of ludicrous errors, which persist unnoticed in even our best photographers' work, in matters that would seem automatic, such as perspective. Our own judgment of perspective is tied up with our sense of touch; the camera, lacking an equivalent, is just as likely as not to pile objects, near and far, all needle-sharp, into a single plane. And so it goes, through a whole series of deficiencies of film and paper. At every stage the process must be manipulated to "correct" it. The finished picture is far from a simple automatic record, even if it has not been so much as breathed on by that old villain, the retoucher.

Now every artifice and every trick on the hard road to reality seems to present its own blind alley and snare its own victims. Our lives are cluttered with "camera angles" and other tricks which Mr. Agha in the latest "U. S. Camera" has listed to the extent of a page. All these aberrations are precious to their perpetrators, and all kill the raw vitality with which the camera record began.

Is there, then, no hope for really great pictures from cameras? There is, and we can do more than just wait for "the *man* behind the lens." We can appreciate his problem. This man may be expected to work in a special photographic way. His products must retain the sharp record of actuality, of objective things, that is the essence of the camera image. He is cut off from setting the stage with vast groups, as did Veronese or Raphael, because they would remain mere tableaux of posing models. He cannot amplify volumes in the manner of Rubens, nor run an expressive line over the plate in the manner of Rembrandt. Indeed, the direct touch of his own hand seems to be the one instrument he may not use. He is denied the sentiency of this hand because it would destroy the value of the lens: its unique, literal, impersonal, and automatic precision. He works with his lens and chemicals to etch a print with light; not as a mechanic or manual worker but in a sense as a director and organizer of light.

It is not proved that there could not be a photographer as great as Rembrandt. Neither is it certain that the best single photograph of a year might not fall to a man of less skill and native insight, happily placed at a telling actual moment. However this may be, the current search for the "candid" shot is extremely healthy. It is leading away from the precious treatment of small subjects to the heat and urgency of human life. In the latest "U. S. Camera" the "news" shots are the indispensable ones. By anonymous press photographers were made such unforgettable prints as the Morgan partners in tense apprehension, heads forward, fingers crooked, eyes glittering; or the refugee mother nursing her child; or the epic Negro striding on the levee in the chain gang and laughing all hell in the face.

DOUGLAS HASKELL

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Letters to the Editors

Nazi News Service

Dear Sirs: Thanks to a remarkable radio transmission device, the patent for which is owned by the German electrical firm, Siemens and Halske, the Nazis are gaining a control of the news published in papers outside Germany which it will be very difficult to break, which in fact is likely to grow stronger as time goes on. The German word *Presseschreibfunk* is used for this ingenious new method of news distribution, which may be roughly described as wireless teleprinting or teletype. The *Presseschreibfunk* does the same thing as a teleprinter, but instead of using cables as its transmitting medium it uses wireless. The immense advantages in respect to speed, freedom from mechanical interruptions, and cheapness are at once obvious.

The operator of the *Presseschreibfunk* transmission system—also called the "Hell system" after its inventor—is the German News Agency of Berlin, which is linked with the European cartel of news agencies consisting of Reuters, Agence Havas, Agenzia Stefani, Fabra, Avala, and a few smaller agencies. Messages sent out by this system are tapped out on a keyboard at the office of the agency, automatically transmitted by radio, picked up by receiving stations anywhere in the world, and automatically decoded and printed. Translation is of course still necessary and is done at the receiving end.

The required apparatus for receiving the Hell Service is leased to the various news agencies at very low rates. It can be installed on payment of only a few hundred marks, and three months' trial is allowed without payment of a hiring fee. The transmissions are in German and French. The service begins at 7 a. m. in German. At 7:15 the same message is sent out in French. Transmission continues thus throughout the day until half an hour after midnight. At present, the Germans claim, the newspapers of all European countries except Great Britain, France, and Austria are receiving this news.

The picture of Nazi Germany which this service presents is of course the picture which the German government wishes the outside world to see. This does not mean, however, that the service consists solely of propaganda pieces. Dr. Goebbels is shrewd enough to know that the foreign news agencies, and the newspapers which these agencies serve, would not buy a service of that kind. Indeed, in order to make the Hell Service attractive to foreign customers, the German News Agency occasionally offers items which are not to be found in the German newspapers. The same methods of suppression and emphasis are applied to the reporting of events in other countries, for the *Presseschreibfunk* offers a world news service. All day long thousands of words whitewashing Italy, Japan, and fascist movements anywhere, and subtly blackening the non-fascist countries—especially the U. S. S. R., the French Popular Front government, and Loyalist Spain—are poured into the news agencies of Europe and by them passed on, if in diminished quantity, to their clients.

The Germans hope, doubtless not without reason, to get the cooperation of the other European agencies in the development and extension of the Hell Service. According to Swedish newspapers, it was the principal subject discussed at the annual conference of the allied agencies held in Stockholm last year. Even the big French agency, Havas, subscribes to the Hell Service, as a check, it is said, on the news sent by its own Berlin bureau. Havas maintains that it does not circulate the Hell messages to its clients. In Poland, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Greece the *Presseschreibfunk* has served the Nazis well in preparing the ground for their push to the East. And it has given them a means of putting over Nazi sales talk which can only be countered by the supply of an even cheaper and faster news service. So far no such service is in sight.

ALEXANDER HENDERSON

London, November 5

Jingoes of 1937

Dear Sirs: Many of the 1917 anti-war liberals, pseudo-pacifists, and revolutionary defeatists have gone over to the jingoes in 1937. One of the most amazing developments of our age, it seems to me, is that the people one could ordinarily count on to fight for peace now cry for war, for that is what the agitation for collective security must lead to ultimately.

A realistic analysis of the respective roles of the fascist nations and the so-called democracies in present-day international politics reveals the hypocrisy of England and France, which, while proclaiming their desire for peace, carry on unremitting warfare against the "have-not" nations. Certainly the democracies wage war on the fascist nations. How else can one interpret their consistent denial to German, Italy, and Japan the right to outlets for the products of their industry and to access to raw materials? How ludicrous is the situation when a bloated British Empire, fresh from the slaughter of Indian, Irish, Afghan, and other colonial peoples, is hailed as the savior of the world's peace! The Soviet Union alone among the larger nations of the world seeks peace without ulterior motives.

Only united action by the real "have-nots" of the world—the workers, the farmers, the colonials—cutting across racial and national boundaries, against the "haves" of every country, can win for the world freedom from the savagery of war. Support of one bandit state, attempting to protect its booty, against another bandit state, anxious for a share in the loot, can lead but to disaster, as Mr. Stone should recognize.

BRENDAN SEXTON

New York, November 17

A Prisoner of Franco

Dear Sirs: My brother Edward was captured by Franco's forces on February 15 together with twenty other American volunteers. For all these many months no word has been heard from him, and my mother is slowly being driven crazy. Since the battalion records were captured at the same time, for months we did not even know what had happened to him. It was only recently that we learned through the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade that he had been taken prisoner.

We do not know now whether he is in a fascist prison camp or has faced a firing squad. I have written and cabled to General Franco, but to no avail. I have appealed to President Roosevelt and to Secretary of State Hull, but still no action.

I appeal to your readers to help us, by writing to President Roosevelt and

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Secretary of State Hull insisting that they investigate the fate and whereabouts of my brother and his twenty colleagues. We feel that only the pressure of public opinion will force the government to act.

GRACE FREED

New York, November 16

Prevention Better Than Cure

Dear Sirs: I have been interested in the articles and letters in your columns on silicosis and especially in the program for labor that Mr. Kindner presented in your issue of November 15. It seems extraordinary that the whole matter of prevention is ignored although it affects many times the number of workers that his plan touches.

Foundries, mines, granite-cutting sheds, and other dusty places can be made safe by the installation of exhaust equipment. If labor would concentrate on a preventive program, Mr. Lindner's could be dispensed with, except that part providing for compensation of men already incapacitated. The *dust* should be removed, not the men. His suggestion merely means that where one diseased worker would be removed, another healthy one would presumably be hired to fill the job, and in turn become afflicted.

Some unions, the painters, for instance, have already made surveys of the hazards their member are exposed to. If this example were followed in other hazardous industries, labor would know what the risks are and what preventive measures have been developed to overcome them. With this knowledge as a basis, labor should see to it that preventive measures are adopted.

H. N. LAWSON, Managing Editor, Journal of Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology, Harvard School of Public Health

Boston, November 17

California Liberals Meet

Dear Sirs: Submerging their differences and party affiliations, representatives of the labor, farmer, and professional classes of California met in conference at Fresno on October 16 and 17 and laid plans for a militant, permanent organization pledged to progressive social legislation. The conference was called by the California Committee of One Hundred for Political Unity in response to the desire of California liberals to find a means of expressing the needs of the people and facing the big issues of the day.

J. Stitt Wilson of Berkeley asserted in his keynote address that we could not separate our problems in California from the terrible world conflict in which the modern tyranny of fascism is ruthlessly assailing democratic rights. Analyzing the elections in California during the last six years, he came to the conclusion that liberals and progressives are no longer a struggling and baffled minority but now constitute a great majority of the voters of the state and are ready to avenge their defeat by the reactionaries that put Republican intrenched privilege in control of California.

There was general agreement on broad principles of policy, such as betterment of living conditions and vigilance against the forces that threaten our free institutions, but upon a definite procedure for the correction of abuses a spirited debate arose. The vision of a permanent organization whch would become an effective power behind elected representatives became the coordinating factor of the conference.

Machinery was set up for the calling of a convention in January or February of next year. The convention, seating as delegates representatives from progressive organizations and members of the enlarged Committee of One Hundred for Political Unity, will select a name, draw up a platform, indorse candidates, and create an organization to carry the campaign into the precincts.

FLORENCE RAGLE

Oakland, Cal., November 9

Material Wanted

Dear Sirs: The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues has authorized the preparation of a Yearbook entitled "The Psychology of Industrial Conflict." A responsible committee consisting of Theodore Newcomb, of Bennington College, Bennington, Vermont; Keith Sward, People's Press, New Kensington, Pennsylvania; and the writer (Teachers College, Columbia University) is interested in securing fresh, concrete field data or documents bearing upon this problem from workers, employers, public officials, and social scientists working in specialized fields. A tentative outline is available, and qualified persons who wish to cooperate in this enterprise either by submitting hitherto unused materials or by contributing to the writing of parts of the text should communicate with a member of the committee.

GEORGE W. HARTMANN, Chairman

New York, November 18

Station Wagon Needed

Dear Sirs: The New Theater League and the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy are considering sponsoring a nation-wide tour of a program of plays on Spain. The program will feature the one-act play "Remember Pedrosito" by John Loftus, the prize-winning script of a recent contest for plays on Loyalist Spain run by the New Theater League. At the moment we are seeking the loan of a station wagon which the players may use as their touring vehicle.

The tour would last from eight to twelve weeks, and responsibility for the return of the wagon in good condition is guaranteed by both sponsoring organizations. Any readers of *The Nation* who may know of an available vehicle are urged to communicate with the writer at the New Theater League, Room 212, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York.

BEN IRWIN, Organizational Secretary

New York, November 18

CONTRIBUTORS

VIRGINIUS DABNEY, author of "Liberalism in the South," is the editor of the Richmond *Times-Dispatch*.

M. E. RAVAGE has lived abroad, principally in France, for the past eight years. His articles on European politics and on current events in Paris have made him familiar to readers of *The Nation* and other periodicals.

LOUIS ADAMIC, one of our outstanding labor journalists, published this fall a new book, "The House in Antigua."

L. O. PRENDERGAST, a journalist living in Mexico City, has frequently interpreted Mexican events for readers of *The Nation*.

RALPH BATES is an English author who has lived in Spain for many years. After the civil war broke out he served for some months as an officer of the Fifteenth International Brigade. His most recent novel is "Rainbow Fish."

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